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NIGGER AN' GENT'MAN

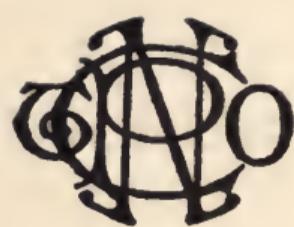
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NED: NIGGER AN' GENT'MAN



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NIGGER AN' GENT'MAN

A Story of War and
Reconstruction Days

BY

NORMAN G. KITTRELL

Judge of the 61st Judicial District of Texas



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To

THE BLACK "UNCLES" AND "AUNTIES"
AND "MAMMIES"

whose matchless fidelity during the war evoked the admiration, not only of the South, but of civilized humanity the world over, and won the profound and continuing gratitude of "dey white folks," this humble volume is affectionately and gratefully dedicated by one of "dey white chilluns."

THE AUTHOR.

NED: NIGGER AN' GENT'MAN

Ned: Nigger an' Gent'man

CHAPTER I

“Good evening, sir!”

The man who extended this salutation was a traveler in a Southern State on the Atlantic border a few years after the close of the war between the States. He was mounted on a superb saddle-horse, and his voice, dress, and bearing betokened that he was a man of intelligence and good breeding. The person to whom the salutation was addressed had not heard or noticed the approach of the traveler, and was not aware of his presence until he heard him speak. The contrast presented by the two was most striking.

The one was a white man, the other a negro. The white man was a little above medium height, his hair was slightly gray, and though he was, perhaps, sixty years of age, he looked younger. The negro was over six feet in height, his hair almost snow white, and he looked seventy years of age or more.

The white man was dressed in a traveling-suit of fashionable cut and fine texture; the negro was dressed in the garments of a laborer, but his clothing was clean and bore evidence of having been well cared for.

The white man was a native of the northern part of New England. He had never been South before, and until a few days previous had never talked with a man who had owned a slave, and had never seen a negro who had been a slave. The negro was a native, having been born and reared a slave on the very plantation on which he then lived.

The white man had been reared amid surroundings and under influences and in a political and social faith which caused him to hold slavery and slaveholders in profound abhorrence. So extreme were his views and such the impression made on his mind by what he had read and heard of slavery in the South, the feelings of the southern people toward Abolitionists, and the character of slave owners, that he was reluctant to disclose the fact that he lived in New England, for he feared that, by reason of such fact, he might be in danger of rude or discourteous treatment, and be unable successfully to accomplish the purpose most near his heart, the one purpose which had brought him South. The thought of the hospitality of any former slaveholder and rebel being offered him, or of his acceptance of such courtesy had never for a moment dwelt in his mind.

The negro had known nothing but slavery and all its associations, except that he had been North as the servant of his master. From his youth he had been the body-servant

of a typical representative southern gentleman, and his wife had been the maid and constant attendant of the wife of that gentleman, a southern woman of education, culture, and social position.

He knew of no other standard whereby to measure merit than that of his "Marster" and "Miss Ma'y," who in his eyes were the embodiment of breeding and worth.

Like all negroes of his class he was an aristocrat of the aristocrats, and while none could in his eyes possibly excel his "white folks," all who fell beneath this, the only standard he knew, were not "quality-folks," and, as he said, he had "no truck erlong dey kin'."

The white man was highly educated, the negro did not know "a letter in the book," but he had a large fund of native shrewdness and common sense, and a remarkable memory. Despite his years the negro was erect and stalwart, and there was in his movements and manners an air of self-respect, blended with a certain deference and politeness, and a sort of crude grace and dignity, derived, so to speak, by absorption and imitation, from long contact and association with southern gentlemen of his master's class, one of the highest type of gentlemen of which there is either record or tradition.

When he heard the traveler's voice he looked up, lifted his hat and bowed.

"Good ebenin', boss. Won't you 'light an' let me put your hoss in de stable an' 'scort you ter de big house?"

"No, I thank you, sir," the traveler replied; "but I will get down and sit on that log there. After I've rested awhile I will go into the town, which they say is only about five miles from here." Dismounting, the traveler seated himself and asked, "Who lives here? It is a beautiful place and the view is a lovely one."

"Dis, sah," said the negro, "is whar my Marster, Cunnel Hamilton Marshall de fus', libs. Dat is his plantashun down dat valley ter de right. His woods-pastur' is over dar on de hill ter de eas', an' dat is his house jes' on de p'int ob de hill ter de wes'. Mighty nigh all de lan' 'roun' here is Marster's. He got 'bout five thousan' acres, an' he raise er sight er corn an' cotton." There was a ring of pride in the negro's voice, and as he looked down the valley at the farm white with cotton ready for the picker, and at the blooded animals in the stable lot, on the fence of which he was leaning, and at the stately colonial mansion with broad galleries and fluted columns on "de p'int ob de hill," he seemed to feel as if he had a proprietary interest in all that he saw.

The sun hung just above the high hill to the west, and its parting rays lighted the woods beyond the valley, where the green and

gold of the sweet-gum, the crimson of the sumach, and the purple of the black-gum blended in beauty, and set the forest aflame with a glow of rarest colors.

The traveler sat for some time in silence, apparently enjoying deeply the beauty of a scene which was to him one of almost entire novelty. After awhile he said:

"This is all very beautiful and very new to me, and since you have told me the name of the owner of this handsome estate, will you not be so kind as to tell me your name?"

"Well, boss, dey tells me my sho'-nuff name is Edward Marshall; but Marster calls me Ned, an' I'm Marster's nigger. I b'en waitin' on him fer fifty year, an' I gwine keep on long as I lib or he lib. He's de bes' man an' de smartes' man in de worl'."

As the conversation proceeded the contrast of expression on the faces of the white man and the negro was as great as their contrast of nativity and condition.

The expression of the white man was that of mingled surprise, perplexity, and embarrassment, while upon the face of the negro was a smile which seemed almost ready to spread into a laugh, a laugh which he resolutely suppressed.

"Boss, you looks lak you mout be powerful tyud. Won't you walk in de house, sah? My Marster an' Mistis is been in town terday, but dey will be back about dus'. You

kin set in de settin'-room by de fiah, 'ca'se it gits kinder cool to'rds de shank ob de ebenin'."

"No, I thank you," the traveler replied. "I will rest here awhile, for I am very tired."

"I guess, boss, you ain't used to ridin' much. I notices you come from de Norf an' ain't much 'quainted wid dis kentry."

The traveler looked up in surprise. "How do you know that?"

"'Scuse me, boss, I don't mean no disre-spec',"—he bowed and touched his hat,— "but I knowed it fus' by your voice, 'ca'se I b'en in de Norf lots o' times; den I knowed it by de way you spoke when you fus' rid up, 'ca'se you said, 'Good ebenin', sah.' "

"Well, was not that proper?"

"Oh, yessah, yessah, it was proper an' perlite an' all dat; but it ain't de way dat er gent'man would er spoke down in dese parts."

"Why, what would a southern gentleman have said?"

"Well, boss, dat 'pen's 'tirely on who it was. Now, sah, it's dis way yer see. Ef he was a gent'man w'ut belong ter de quality-folks an' was kinder old lak Marster, an' knowed me, he would er sayed, 'Howdy do, Ned?' in de perlites', kindes' way. Ef he didn't know me he would er sayed, 'Howdy, old man,' or 'Howdy, Uncle.' Jes' so. Ef he was a quality young man what knowed me lak dem young gent'mens does w'ut comes ter

Marster's house er visitin,' he would er sayed, 'Howdy, Uncle Ned; how you do ter-day?' an' sayed it jes' ez perlite ez he would er spoke ter Marster; an' w'en any er dem gent'-men spoke I'd say, 'Thankee, Marster, I'm tolurbel ter-day; hope you's well.' Der ain't none er dem would er sayed *sah*, an' I ain't usen ter it. It 'pears, boss, lak you kin mighty nigh tell quality-folks by de way dey speaks ter de po' an' de 'umbl', speshully ter niggers; dey al'ays speaks kin' an' perlite. But scrub-folks, w'ut ain't got no manners, speaks big-gerty-lak an' rough, lak it bemean 'em ter be perlite ter de po'."

"Well, you've told me what the 'quality-folks,' as you call them, would have said. Now, how would people who are not 'quality-folks,' whatever that means, have spoken to you?"

"Boss, I tell you right now, I don' had much truck along er none but quality-folks; but some time some ob de udder kin' comes erlong heah, an' ef one er dem taller-face trash crowd—what libs over yonder in de san'ills, an' who ain't nebber had er nigger, ner his daddy nuther—was ter come erlong heah, dar 'd be 'bout er half er foot 'twixt de een' er his britches' laigs an' de top er his shoes, ef he had on a'y shoe, an' his ha'r won' be comb' sence de wah, an' he'd say, 'Say, nigg-e-r,' an' I wouldn't pay no 'tenshun ter him, 'ca'se his sort ain't never had no man-

ners, ner ain't been used ter nothin', an' I don' reckernize dat kin' 'tall."

"I fear you think a man must have money and fine clothes to be a gentleman."

"No, sah; no, sah, boss; money ain't got nuttin' 'tall ter do wid it. Money cain't buy no manners. It's all in de blood an' in de stock an' de raisin'. Marster 'd be a gent'-man ef he was in de po'-house. Den dar's lots er peepul w'ut ain't rich w'ut's pow'ful good folks. De carpenter w'ut build Marster's house an' de man w'ut mek his kerridge is de bes' kin' er men, an' I gits on wid 'em fine. Den lots er men w'ut wa'n't rich an' didn't had no niggers, wen' ter de wah wid mah young marsters; an' dey fit lak wil'-cats. But I nacherly 'spises de lazy, triflin', po'-white trash w'ut libs in de san'ills an' won' wu'k. Dey got a co'n-patch 'bout de size o' Marster's gyarden, an' a 'backer-patch 'bout big ez er saddle blanket, an' all dey do is, dey chaws terbacker an' squirt de juice thu' dey teef, an' cuss de guberment. But, boss, it's gittin' to'rds dus' an' you must go ter de house. You'll fin' a good fiah in de settin'-room, an' Marster an' Miss Ma'y 'll be home 'fore long. Soon ez I put up your hoss I'll go wid you, 'ca'se ob co'se you's gwine ter stay all night."

"I am obliged, but perhaps I had best wait until the gentleman of the house comes, and ask his permission."

" 'Tain't no use ter wait ter ax Marster, 'ca'se I ripresents him w'en he ain't ter home, an' ef I lets you le'be heah dis time ob de ebenin', 'stidder takin' you ter de house, Marster gwine ter meet you down de road, an' den he gwine ter ax me is I los' my manners."

" Well, I shall risk accepting your invitation, and will be glad if your master will allow me to stay several days, for I am very much fatigued; and besides I may be able to learn something I am anxious to know."

" Oh, dat's all right, boss. De longer you stay de better Marster gwine lak it, fer he sho'ly do lub comp'ny."

" I will gladly pay him liberally for my entertainment."

" Say, boss, please, sah, don't say nuttin' to Marster 'bout payin' for stayin' wid him, 'ca'se ef you do you sho' gwine ter 'fen' him."

" Why should it give offense? I am a stranger, and I have no right to expect your 'marster,' as you call him, to keep me and my horse for several days, or for a day, without pay."

" Dat's all right, boss; but 'scuse me, sah, but you sho' will 'fen' Marster all de same, 'ca'se he's a quality-gent'man, sah, an' he don' run no hotel. I b'en here sence I was born an' I'se seen more'n ten thousan' peepul er gwine in an' er comin' outen dat house, but I ain't never seen no man pay for stayin' in it yit.

No, sah, no man don' pay for eatin' er sleepin' in my Marster's house."

"Why, I paid for my entertainment last night, and the man who owned the house was, I should judge, a rich man."

"Whar mout it er b'en dat you stay, boss, an' what mout er b'en de man's entitlement w'ut lib dar?"

"I should judge it was some twenty-five miles north of here. The house was large and well furnished, and the owner's name, I believe, was Harper."

"Oh, yes, ob co'se, ob co'se. He tuk yo' money 'ca'se he ain't quality-folks. He was oberseer in slav'y-time, an' no oberseer never was quality-folks. He ain't b'long in Marster's class 'tall."

"You have spoken several times of 'quality-folks.' What do you mean by 'quality-folks'? Now Mr. Harper is rich and lives in a fine house, and he treated me as well as a stranger has a right to expect."

"Oh, yes, boss, he got a fine house an' plenty ob money, but dat don' make quality. Quality-folks is quality-folks, an' when you see my Marster an' Mistis you 'll see de diffunce better'n I kin tell yer. Hit's in dey blood jes' lak it wuz in dey gran'daddy an' gran'mammy blood. Folks is jes' lak hosses —some is quality, some is scrub. Now, you jes' look ober dar at dat broad-back, big-laig, fat, slick hoss. He kin pull th'ee bales er

cotton, but ef you was ter rub him an' train him an' feed him on wheat an' lightnin' he couldn' run lak dat yonder slim-neck, flat-laig, fine-ha'r'd, short-fetlock sorrel stan'in' dar by him, 'ca'se he's a scrub an' de sorrel's er quality-horse; got de blood in him, got de breedin'; an' dar don' nobody on'erstan' how de diff'unce is, but it's dar, an' it's de same way wid people.

" 'Scuse me, boss, I don' mean no disrespec' ter you ner nobody. He's a white man an' I'se a nigger; but ef dat man w'ut you stayed wid las' night had dat crib full er gol' dollars, an' er house fine as de Capertul ob de Newnited States, he wouldn' be ekal to Cunnel Hamilton Marshall, my Marster, an' he wouldn' be quality-folks. Furdermo', his wife wouldn' be ekal ter my Miss Ma'y; but ez fer dat, dar ain't na'y 'oman is ekal ter her upon de yearth."

" You certainly have a high opinion of the gentleman and lady you call ' Marster ' and ' Miss Ma'y. ' "

" Ain't got no higher ' pinyun ob 'em dan dey 'serve, boss; an' you 'll say de same when you see 'em.

" Ef you'll walk in de house now, boss, Hester, dat's my wife, 'll show you inter de settin'-room."

The gentleman walked up the avenue to the stately mansion which stood something like a hundred yards to the west up a gentle

slope. It was painted white with green blinds, the galleries were broad, the columns fluted, and there were wings at either side on the same lines with the main building, but only one story in height. The fire-light shone through the high windows, and the whole building presented a most inviting and hospitable appearance.

He was met at the head of the steps by a typical southern "aunty," who dropped a curtsy and led the way to the hall. Her dress was of blue and black stripes, a bandanna handkerchief was tied about her head, and a white handkerchief served as a collar. She looked exceedingly neat and she moved like one accustomed to receiving guests. There was a noticeable pride in her bearing, but she was free from any offensive pretension; on the contrary, her demeanor was that of a thoroughly trained servant; humility, blended with pride and dignity, characterizing her every movement.

She escorted the stranger to the guest chamber, a large room furnished in solid mahogany, and every appointment in good taste.

When he was ready to descend she returned and escorted him to the sitting-room.

The sitting-room was an apartment twenty or more feet square, with ceilings twelve feet in height. It was plainly and most comfortably furnished with furniture of the best

quality, such as was in common use a quarter of a century earlier.

In the large open fireplace there was a roaring wood fire of oak and hickory which lighted brilliantly the entire room, and brought into bold relief the family pictures on the wall. The room had an air of comfort and delightful hospitality, and as the stranger stood before the fire he wondered what manner of people they were who lived in such a house, and of whom the old negro and former slave spoke in such terms of pride and affection.

He had often read and heard of the horrors of slavery, of the cruelty, brutality, and savagery of slave owners, of their intolerance of all who differed from them, and of how the slaves hated their masters and yearned for freedom. As he waited for the coming of Colonel Marshall and his wife, his hosts that were to be, he almost wished that he, a New England "Yankee," had not been so bold as to accept the invitation of a servant to become the guest of an ex-slave owner and "rebel."

CHAPTER II

As the traveler, with feelings of mingled curiosity and apprehension, stood in the brightly lighted room, he heard a vehicle draw up at the foot of the steps, and a strong, full, kindly voice say, "Well, Ned, you seem to have company to-night," and he heard the old man reply, "Yes, sah, dar's a gent'man in de settin'-room, sah. He is a trab'ler, an' rid up late dis ebenin', an' wuz pow'ful tyud, an' I axed him ter stop, an' he say he 'd wait an' see you 'fo' he come in de house; but I tol' him 'twa'n't no use fer dat, 'ca'se ef I let er gent'man le'be heah at night an' tyud, you sho' gwine ax me ef I done los' my manners."

"I certainly should," the master replied. "You did exactly right. Come, Mary, we must go in and greet our guest."

Just as Colonel Marshall and his wife started up the steps Ned drew close to the Colonel and said in a tone he meant to be too low to be heard in the house, "Marster, de trab'ler look lak er mighty nice man, but he come f'um de Norf an' don' know nuttin' 'tall 'bout we folks down heah. He sho'-nuff Yankee."

The stranger heard the remark and the

Colonel's reply, "That makes no difference. He is in my house, he is my guest, and he is welcome. If you had not invited him to stay you would have offended me."

Colonel Marshall passed quickly into the hall and thence into the sitting-room, while Mrs. Marshall went into her bed chamber. As his host approached the stranger saw he was more than six feet in height, erect and stalwart, with clear and ruddy skin. His hair, which had been dark, was almost entirely white, and so was his beard. His eyes were dark and clear, and he carried his seventy years with an ease and grace of manner which proclaimed him the gentleman that he was by birth and breeding.

He stepped quickly to where his guest stood, and with outstretched hand said, "My name is Marshall, and I am glad, sir, to welcome you to my house."

"My name is Standwick and I am from Maine," said the stranger, "and I am appreciative of your cordial welcome, sir. I trust I have not offended by acting upon the invitation of your servant to become your guest for the night."

"No, indeed, my servant did exactly right. He has given us the pleasure of having a guest, and did what he knew I expected and desired him to do—extend the hospitality of my house to any gentleman who desires to stay. If you will excuse me for a moment I

will bring Mrs. Marshall." He returned in a few minutes, accompanied by his wife, whom he presented to his guest. She gave him a cordial and gracious welcome, and one that made him feel perfectly at home.

Mrs. Marshall was above the average height, and was an exceedingly handsome woman, and Mr. Standwick soon saw that she was to the tips of her slender fingers, not only an aristocrat, but a woman of culture, and a brilliant conversationalist. Turning smilingly to her husband she said, "My dear, you have forgotten to remove your overcoat and gloves." As she was assisting him in removing his coat, Colonel Marshall said, "We are specially glad, Mr. Standwick, to welcome you to our home, because your name is one very dear to us. It is associated in our minds and memories with two as noble spirits as ever gave up their lives on the altar of duty, and as soon as you uttered your name the thought occurred to me that perhaps they were your kinsmen, perhaps your sons."

If Colonel Marshall and his wife had been looking into the face of their guest they would have seen pass over it an expression of surprise amounting almost to a shock, but this expression was followed by one of relief, if not of real delight; but before they turned he had recovered himself and his face had resumed its usual expression.

"I have never been blessed with a son," he

said calmly, with a barely perceptible quiver in his voice; "and if those you knew were kinsmen of mine, I do not know it. There are families in New England of the same name, except that they drop the *d*; some of my immediate family have done so."

"The young men we knew did not use the *d* and they were from Connecticut. They were worthy to be kin to the noblest, and for your sake I wish they had been of your blood. Though one of them died in the ranks of the foes of the South, or rather was a leader of her foes, he was a gentleman and a hero, and his brother who fell on the other side was as knightly a spirit as ever died for his country."

"As you know, Colonel Marshall," Mr. Standwick said, "I am a native of the North, and doubtless your views and mine relative to the war which ended a few years ago are very divergent. I have never had it in my heart to feel unkindly to the men of the South who battled for their honest convictions, and I am sure we will be willing to accord to each other credit for sincerity of statement and belief.

"I have never been South before; I was never before in the house of a representative southern gentleman. Never, till I rode up here this afternoon, had I spoken to a man who had been a slave. I know nothing of slaves or free negroes, or of former slave owners, except what came to me in grievously

distorted shape, and I feel sure already that I have much to learn and to unlearn."

"We are well prepared," said Colonel Marshall, "to believe what you say, and freely accord you the same sincerity of conviction we claim for ourselves. I trust you will stay long enough to learn at first hand the truth concerning those matters of which you have heard from prejudiced sources. The South has nothing to conceal. She is willing to be judged by her record. However, we will have ample time to discuss questions which have by the inevitable logic of events become in a large degree mere academic abstractions; for the present the more pleasing and profitable discussion of supper claims our attention, and we will go immediately, as I see Hester waiting to announce it."

Mr. Standwick, bowing, offered his arm to Mrs. Marshall, and followed by Colonel Marshall she led the way across the broad hall to the dining-room, a large room with high ceilings, finished in dark woods, heated by a wood fire in an open fireplace, and lighted by candles in silver candelabra.

The supper was a typical one, abundant, skillfully cooked and temptingly served, and as the guest ate with appetite sharpened by his long ride, he thought that he had never seen a table so calculated at once to tempt and satisfy the appetite. There was in setting and service perfection in every detail,

but no ostentation or attempt at display. It was such a meal as such a host and hostess might have been expected to preside over.

Hester, the wife of Ned, perfectly trained, needed neither command nor suggestion, but was at hand to supply every desire of her master's guest, and what with perfect service, a dignified, intelligent, and affable host, and a gracious and brilliant hostess, the northern stranger found his first meal in a southern home an experience as delightful as it was novel, and when he had supped he bowed to his hostess and assured her he had never before so enjoyed a meal, and his tone and manner attested his entire sincerity.

After they had returned to the sitting-room, Mr. Standwick said,

"Never until I rode across the country did I appreciate the ruin and devastation wrought by the war, and after I saw the chimneys of so many burned homes standing like mute memorials I wondered how this house and another I saw this afternoon something like a mile distant escaped what seems to have been well-nigh universal ruin."

"It would," said Colonel Marshall, "require a long story to explain this almost marvelous exception to the rule of destruction which seemed to have been the guide of those who commanded the army which invaded this section; but because of some unpleasant features connected with the story I prefer

not to relate the incident, with which, however, one of the men of your name was most nobly connected.

"Your curiosity is most natural, and can be readily gratified by inquiry of Ned, who will delight in giving you every detail. You will find him most interesting, and you are at liberty to talk with him freely concerning any incident or matter of local history, whether it relates to a time before, during, or since the war. You will find he has a wonderful memory, a remarkable capacity for interesting recital, and while he is uneducated, he has a large fund of common sense, and is absolutely truthful.

"By the way, I am sorry to say I shall be compelled to turn you over to Ned as your host and entertainer during the day for several days, instead of enjoying that pleasure myself. Our only surviving son—we gave two to the South—is a lawyer living in the county-seat five miles to the south, and his only child, a son, Hamilton Marshall the third, has been very ill for more than two weeks. Being the only grandchild and a most manly, promising, and attractive little fellow, all our hearts are bound up in him, and his grandmother and I drive in every day to aid in nursing him, returning home every night.

"He is now convalescent, but he needs much nursing, and we must continue to go in

every day until all danger is past. Ned and Hester will see to your comfort, and I will have Ned drive over and bring my friend, Captain Alston, who lives in the other house that was spared, to visit you. There will be a buggy and horse, and a saddle-horse at your disposal, and my guns are in excellent condition and my dogs are well trained, if you are fond of quail shooting. I am sorry that we must be away, but am sure you will appreciate the conditions."

"Certainly, Colonel Marshall. I would not have you remain on my account. The very novelty of the situation will, in a measure, atone for your absence.

"Having your permission to talk to your servant, I have no doubt I shall find him both interesting and instructive. I should perhaps apologize to you for talking for a considerable time with him this afternoon, but he is an entire novelty and a most interesting and amusing one. I had never talked with a negro who had been a slave, and the opportunity to do so was a temptation I could not resist."

"I assure you," returned Colonel Marshall, "no apology is necessary for talking to Ned. While he is a negro, or as he calls himself and all his race, a 'nigger,' he is a gentleman. He has been my body-servant and carriage-driver for fifty years. His wife has been the maid and constant attendant of

my wife from her childhood, and both of them have by training, association, and absorption acquired the manners of well-bred white people; and know what is proper in a social way much better than many whites. They know their places and keep them. They are proud of the family they belong to, and are scrupulously honest.

"When they were slaves there was not enough money in the State to buy them, and they have never known what it is to feel a blow or to suffer for want of food, shelter, or clothing, and now that they are free I would shed my blood as freely for either of them as I would in my own defense.

"They nobly repay our care and affection. I am obliged at times to be away from home at night, and unfortunately, under the changed conditions which freedom of the negro has brought about, no man can safely leave his wife at night unprotected. It was not so before the war. Every woman in this State was as safe from molestation at the hands of a slave before and even during the war, as if she had been guarded by a legion of angels; but now I would no more leave my wife at night unprotected against villainous, lecherous negroes, than I would leave her in this house were it in flames.

"So when I am obliged to be away, all that is necessary for me to do is to tell Ned, and he spreads his bed by the door of his

mistress's room in the hall, and is her sentinel and guard, and she sleeps with a feeling of perfect safety, because she knows Ned would die in her defense. Woe be to the man, white or black, who approaches this house with evil design while that brave, faithful, stalwart old 'nigger' stands guard over the mistress he loves better than his own life.

"No, you need not apologize for talking with Ned. I understand, and give you *carte blanche* to ask him about any matter relating to my family, or the history of this neighborhood or county."

"Thank you, sir. In view of the novelty of my position, and of my utter ignorance of many things of which I desire to be correctly informed, I esteem your permission a great favor. I know already that I have heard and read much that was not true, and I have no doubt that Ned can set me right upon many matters. I accept your invitation to stay longer with much pleasure. Such hospitality to me, a 'Yankee,' at the hands of a southern family, I never dreamed of, and I am deeply grateful for it."

"I am sure," said Mrs. Marshall, smiling, "you are entirely welcome. The pleasure is on our side; the favor *you* confer. We see very few people except our friends and immediate neighbors, and a visitor from the North whom we could or would entertain in recent years has been very rare, and it is a

great pleasure to have a northern gentleman under our roof."

In view of the position in which the guest found himself, his mind naturally dwelt on that great conflict which was only a few years in the past.

"Colonel Marshall," he said, "the further I get away from the war the more terrible it seems, but I never did appreciate what it meant to you people of the South till I traveled over the route of the northern army. Now I know that, great as was the material and financial loss, it was nothing compared with the loss of the noble lives and the sorrow visited upon so many hearts and homes; however, sir, I suppose it may be said that the war was inevitable.

"From the very foundation of the Government there were, and have been, two different schools of political thought, two parties who held diametrically conflicting theories of governmental power and constitutional construction, and their differences of opinion extended even to the construction, meaning, and scope of the decisions of the highest court in the land, and it is not surprising that from the friction of opposing views the flames of war were generated.

"The men of the North fought to save the Union and sustain the theories and contentions which one party deemed vital to the preservation of the Union, while your people

went to war to vindicate the southern theory of government and the correctness of judicial decisions of eminent southern judges."

"Pardon me, Mr. Standwick," said Mrs. Marshall, "and permit me to say in all kindness that you have fallen into error which has often found expression, but which gains no title to respect by frequent repetition, and I must express my earnest dissent from your views. The South did not go to battle to sustain any man, or any party's theory of constitutional construction or governmental power, or to vindicate the correctness of the decisions of any court. I sent three sons to the war. One came back maimed for life; two fell in battle, and, I am proud to say, fell in the very forefront of the fighting, and I know they did not give their lives to sustain the holding of any statesman or judge. They gave no thought to any such question; but in common with all those who stood with them on the fighting line, they fought to defend their native land, the homes of their living and the graves of their dead, against an invading foe.

"They did not stop to consider whether that foe came from beyond the Potomac or beyond the sea, or whether he spoke the same or an alien tongue. They heard the call for an army of invasion; they heard the tramp of that army; and my boys, and the boys of tens of thousands of other southern mothers,

went forth to plant themselves between that advancing army and all they held nearest and dearest. They were not moved by a desire to destroy the Union, which was in a great measure the work of their illustrious countrymen of the South; but by the desire and purpose to repel invasion of the land of their birth; but if the defense of that land involved destruction of the Union they did not pause on that account.

"The duty they owed to their consciences, to the land they loved, and to home and kindred, transcended every other obligation, and defense of their action rests upon the impregnable ground that they fought in defense of their homes and firesides, a motive and a purpose infinitely nobler, stronger, and holier than defense of any theory of government or vindication of the correctness of any judicial decree. My sons gave up their lives out of very love of country, and, Mr. Standwick, that is the noblest and most unselfish emotion that ever stirred a human heart, and by the chords of that love their hearts were bound to the throne of God itself."

Mr. Standwick listened with interest and astonishment to the earnest words of his hostess. She had spoken with deep feeling, and when she ceased, tears gathered in her clear, gray eyes; and after a moment's silence she continued:

"Please pardon me; I fear my feelings and

the memories of the past betrayed me into speech that may possibly have wounded you; if so, I assure you I did not intend to do so. Even were you not my guest, I would not, for any consideration, say anything that could possibly wound your feelings, or be construed as a reflection upon the actions of those with whose purposes and achievements you were in sympathy."

"My dear Madam," said Mr. Standwick, "I trust I appreciate your feelings. You have said nothing to wound or offend, but you have put the case of the South before me in a light in which it was never before presented to me. I sincerely desire to know the truth, and while it is unlikely that my convictions will be changed, I assure you I entertain nothing but respect for yours, and I honor the memories of your gallant sons who died for what they believed to be right."

"Now you must pardon me, Mr. Standwick," said Colonel Marshall, smilingly, "if I take part in the discussion which you and my very southern wife have gotten into. I feel pretty sure that you will believe that however effective the process of reconstruction may have been in some quarters, that it certainly has had no effect upon at least one southern woman; and Mrs. Marshall thinks and feels as ninety-nine out of every hundred southern women do. They are wholly immune against reconstruction laws. A 're-

constructed 'southern woman no man has ever seen.

"I hope that you will not misunderstand me when I say that your use of the phrase 'believed to be right,' shows that you have fallen into an error which, like the one to which Mrs. Marshall took exception, has been often repeated, not only by people in the North, but even by people in the South. Understand me, please, I do not question the honesty of conviction or sincerity of purpose of any northern soldier, and as I entertain no bitterness of feeling, I will express none; but permit me to say that my sons did not die for what they only '*believed* to be right,' but for what they *knew* to be right, and which *was* right beyond the possibility of doubt, or successful denial."

"But, Colonel Marshall, does not your statement reflect upon those who fought upon the other side, and in effect charge them with sinning against light and knowledge?"

"I had in my mind anticipated your question, and I unhesitatingly answer, No, not at all. No reflection is intended or implied. My statement is entirely consistent with the statement that I accord to all who differed from me the same sincerity of belief and honesty of action that I claim for my sons and myself.

"I am not going to enter into any discussion of the construction of the Constitution or

into an analysis of any judicial decree, for the defense of my sons and my countrymen of the South does not rest upon any such ground. The people of the North and South differed upon questions that involved the most important rights of the South, and that the people of the North believed involved the continuance and existence of the Union itself. Statesmen tried in vain to settle these questions in the forum of legislation, and war followed upon failure to do so, and the people of the North, in order to enforce and apply their views of constitutional construction and governmental power and jurisdiction, invaded the South with an army. The people of the South resented such an invasion, and it does not matter what differences between nations, or between different parts of the same nation, precede hostilities, or what the grounds of difference are, when the people of one nation invade the territory of another nation, or the people of one section of a nation invade the other section, in order to enforce their views or put in effect their policies, the people whose land is invaded, and who fight to resist such invasion, are always right.

" This proposition is unanswerable, because those who strike in defense of their homes are justified upon the same principles of self-defense as is the individual citizen who defends his home or his person or his family. When the defense of home and wife and chil-

dren becomes necessary against any invader, come from where he may, or moved by whatever motive he may be, the act of those who resent such invasion is by its own inherent righteousness and moral force lifted into an atmosphere where the letter of no statute applies, and where no earthly tribunal has jurisdiction.

"If we of the South had begun the war by calling for volunteers to invade the North, in order to force upon you our views of constitutional construction and the rights of the States, and if we had invaded your land, we would have been the aggressors, and you would have been right in resisting, just as we were. This contention does not involve denial of the claim of the men of the North that they were prompted by honest and patriotic motives. I make no such denial, for too many of them sealed their fidelity to their convictions with their life blood, to make such denial reasonable or true."

"The statement to which I took exception, Mr. Standwick," said Mrs. Marshall, "and the one which my husband has just combated, are both in my judgment grossly incorrect; but there is another often made, which is an inexcusable slander upon the people of the South, and that is, that they fought to save their slaves. I would not have given the life, not the little finger, of one of my sons for every negro on earth, and it is a cruel

slander to say that the South offered up the lives of tens of thousands of her young men, the representatives, types and exponents, intellectually and morally, of the loftiest civilization the world ever saw, to save the value of a few ignorant and unprofitable slaves.

"The men of the South fought because from their viewpoint of right and duty, they would have been base cowards and unfit to be free, if they had not fought. That states the South's position in a few words, and while you do not now agree with it, and doubtless never will, it is the fixed faith of the southern people, and they are willing to answer for it and stand upon it, before the bar of history and before the judgment bar of God."

"My dear Madam," returned Mr. Standwick, "I do not question your sincerity, and I admire your fidelity to your convictions and your cause, and since I have already seen and heard so much that I never dreamed of, and find that my preconceived opinions have been in a large measure wrong, I will not protract this discussion."

"Good," said Colonel Marshall; "time has slipped by very fast and you are doubtless fatigued after your ride and would like to retire."

"Hester tells me," said Mrs. Marshall, "that you have been to your room, but Colonel Marshall will escort you to it again. I will bid you good night. I wish you pleas-

sant dreams, and ask your forgiveness if in my fervor of feeling and speech I have wounded your feelings," and with a bow, Mrs. Marshall left the room.

Colonel Marshall, silver candlestick in hand, led the way to the guest chamber, and after seeing that everything necessary to the comfort and convenience of his guest had been provided, bade him good night. The guest soon fell into deep and refreshing slumber. The "Yankee" was asleep and safe beneath the "Rebel's" roof.

CHAPTER III

WHEN Mr. Standwick awoke next morning, Ned was just leaving the room after building in the open fireplace a fire which soon diffused a cheerful warmth over the entire apartment. When he saw that the guest was awake, Ned said:

“Good morning, boss. You must ‘scuse me fer comin’ in de room widout wakin’ you, but sleep had sich a grip on yer eyes dat I couldn’t wake you by knockin’, so I jes’ come in anyhow an’ mek you a fire, an’ now I’m gwine down an’ fetch you your mawnin’ coffee. I hope you sleep’ well.”

Upon being assured that he had rested well, the old negro left the room and soon returned with a tray on which was a cup of coffee, a pitcher of golden cream, and a bowl of cut loaf-sugar, and he insisted that Mr. Standwick should drink the coffee while yet in bed, assuring him that to do otherwise would be violative of immemorial custom, and the inevitable precursor of the very worst luck.

Mr. Standwick good-naturedly yielded to the old negro’s insistence, and as he handed the cup back to him, Ned said,

“Now, boss, w’en you come down-sta’rs

Marster 'll have a little somepin' on de sidebode stronger 'an coffee. He big chu'ch member an' de bes' man de Lord ebber made sence de worl' bergin, but he lub a little wine fer his stummick' sake, lak de man I hears 'em read about in de Good Book; 'cept 'tain't 'zactly wine, but hit's pow'ful good, an' you bound fer ter drink wid him. He b'en takin' his toddy in de mawnin' ebber since I knowed him, but he ain't never b'en drunk na'y time yit. When you see a suddern gent'man w'ut don't drink mint-julep in de summer an' hot toddy in de winter somepin' sho' wrong wid him."

When Mr. Standwick entered the sitting-room, Colonel Marshall greeted him most cheerily, and offered him a most delicious toddy, which despite New England training, the guest did not decline. As he sipped it, he said,

"I have often heard of the southern custom of the sideboard and morning toddy, but this is my first experience in enjoyment of it, and under such circumstances I cannot see the great harm and danger in it that I have often heard pictured."

"Well," said Colonel Marshall, "strange as it may sound to you, I am not altogether in favor of it as a family custom. I know the usual argument that there was less drunkenness fifty years ago than there is now

when the custom is not so prevalent and men drink elsewhere, and that to familiarize boys and young men with the use of liquor is safer than to forbid them to drink at all. From observation and reading, however, I am inclined to believe that the taste for liquor developed by constant use of it by fathers a generation ago has been by the law of heredity transmitted to the young men of this generation, and if I had sons to raise again I should, in order to avoid possible danger and the appearance of evil, not maintain my sideboard or take my morning toddy."

Early rising was an established custom in the Marshall household, and it was yet some time before breakfast when Mrs. Marshall joined the gentlemen in the sitting-room and greeted Mr. Standwick and expressed the hope that he had rested well.

The breakfast was as delightful as the supper had been, and when it was finished, Mr. Standwick said to his hostess,

"Madam, I have often heard and read of southern cooking, southern dishes, and southern hospitality, but the half has not been told. I shall chant the praises of the culinary skill of southern colored cooks to Mrs. Standwick to the limits of prudence; for really our famed New England cooking cannot excel that of the South, and I am sure that, with you, hospitality must amount almost to a religion."

"I think, Mr. Standwick," Mrs. Marshall replied, "that it may safely be said that our cooking, and what you are pleased to term our hospitality, must both be in a large degree a matter of usage and tradition. Our family cooks, such as the one who prepared the meals which I am glad to see you so enjoy, descend to us, as it were, and the presiding genius of my kitchen is a natural cook, a culinary artist of instinctive skill. Hospitality is as much her pleasure as it is ours. The more guests she has to cook for, and the more elaborate the meal, the happier she is."

When the party left the dining-room the surrey was already at the door, and Colonel Marshall, turning to his guest, said, "Now, Mr. Standwick, Mrs. Marshall and I must go to our grandson, and we will leave you in the care of Ned and Hester. You could not be in better hands. Ned will be your host for the day, and you may rest assured he will not presume upon his position, but that he will keep his place as becomes a self-respecting negro and servant. Hester will see that the inner man does not suffer, and, if you wish, Ned can show you some excellent shooting. Should the weather become inclement or any contingency prevent our return, I have directed Ned to go over and bring my friend and neighbor, Captain Alston, whose house you see on the hill opposite this, to spend the night with you. You will find him a cour-

teous, cultured gentleman, and a delightful companion."

"Thank you, Colonel; you certainly have made every provision for my comfort and pleasure. I am sure I will find Ned an entertaining host, and I am certain Hester will not fail to do her part."

When his host and hostess had left, Mr. Standwick said,

"Well, sir, now I would like to have some writing material, if it is convenient."

"Co'se, boss, dere's plenty er pens an' paper an' ink in de house an' Hester done put 'em in de settin'-room; but 'scuse me, boss, dere ain't no use er callin' me 'sah.' You jes' call me Ned, like Marster an' all de other suddern gent'men do. I'm used ter dat, but dis here 'sah' bus'ness, f'um a white man, don' strike mah hearin' right."

"Very well," said Mr. Standwick, laughing, "'Ned' it shall be. Now I will go in and write to my wife."

Before beginning to write, Mr. Standwick seated himself in an arm-chair near the fire and remained long absorbed in thought. The events of the past few hours had been so unexpected, so interesting, so delightful, so different from anything he could possibly have expected or imagined, that he wished to collect his thoughts so that he might write his wife clearly and coherently, all he was eager to write her. After he had recalled the

events of the afternoon, night, and morning, and thought long upon them, he took up his pen:

"My dear wife: Before beginning this letter I sat quietly alone for a long time in order to collect my thoughts, because I am going to relate to you certain facts which I am sure you will find so surprising as to be almost incredible. However, they will not be unpleasant, for I am well, and most comfortably situated.

"You know my sentiments upon the question of slavery in the South, the views I entertain concerning slaveholders, my abhorrence of the entire system, and my opinion of all those connected with it. I know how fully you agree with me upon these matters, and how, like me, you have learned to believe that there was only one side to the slavery question, and that one full of cruelty and barbarism and starvation for the slaves, and that all slave owners were heartlessly cruel; that all slaves were driven day and night with the lash, and that for all who live in the North and differ from them in sentiment concerning slavery and the late war, the former slaveholders entertain feelings of unrelenting enmity, and that neither you nor I ever dreamed that in my trip South I would avow my sentiments or disclose my place of residence, and then ask for shelter beneath the roof of a rebel and former slave owner.

" If such a possibility had been suggested to me when I was leaving home I should have treated it as most ridiculous and absolutely absurd. When I think of every statement I have written above being true, I am almost unable to realize where I am. I am mentally dazed by my environment and by the events of the last eighteen hours.

" You will find it difficult to believe me when I say that I am seated before a cheerful fire, in the elegantly appointed sitting-room of a stately colonial mansion, the guest of a rebel and former slave owner, and that the servants at my disposal were all born slaves on this plantation, and that I am afraid even to suggest paying for my entertainment lest I give offense to my most hospitable host. I know that you will at once inquire how it all happened, and how I am treated, and what manner of people do I find rebels and ex-slaveholders?

" The answer to each inquiry is simple and most satisfactory. I chanced to stop late in the afternoon to rest by the roadside in front of this residence, the home of Colonel Hamilton Marshall, and seeing a colored man standing near the stable lot, spoke to him. He replied most courteously and I talked for a considerable time with him, and from the first he insisted that I must let him put my horse in the stable and escort me to the house, where I must spend the night, saying his 'Marster'

and 'Miss Ma'y' were away in the town, but would be back soon; that if I passed instead of stopping for the night, his master would think he, the colored man, had lost his 'manners.' I demurred and insisted that I would wait until his 'marster' came, and get his permission to stop; but he insisted it was not necessary and that I must go to the house. I finally consented, saying I would cheerfully pay for my accommodation; but the old man most earnestly besought me not to say 'pay' to his 'marster,' for if I did it would give him offense. Accordingly, I have not done so.

"Both Colonel Marshall and his wife greeted me courteously and welcomed me with evident sincerity and cordiality to their home. No friend or neighbor in all our home State could possibly have been more delightfully hospitable. The old negro told them I was a stranger and a 'Yankee,' but seemingly it did not in the slightest degree lessen the graciousness of their welcome.

"From what the negro said, and from my own observation, I conclude that my host and hostess are faithful representatives of the very highest class of southern society, and I may say are distinctly typical southern aristocrats, of whom we have often heard.

"They are educated, cultured, and their manners are most charming; they are cordial and hospitable without effusiveness or ostentation—in short, they are people of breeding

and unexceptionable manners. You cannot fail to be impressed with their sincerity, and all feeling of being a stranger is banished by their gracious hospitality.

"They have talked freely with me about the war, into which they sent their sons, two of whom fell in battle and the third was maimed for life, and they express no regret for their action, make no apology or explanation, and seem to feel that they did nothing but their duty.

"They cherish with pride the memories of a cause which you and I have always believed was a most unrighteous rebellion, but which they say was a conflict waged to repel invasion of their homes and a defense of their firesides, and that in that conflict they gave no thought to anything else. They will not silently permit any person to say that the southern soldiers fought for what 'they believed to be right,' but take issue with the statement at once, and insist that they fought for what they *knew* was right, and for what was right beyond the possibility of doubt or denial; yet they indulge in not one unkind or uncharitable word. It is impossible to feel aught else than respect and admiration for such people.

"What will doubtless surprise you most, my dear wife, is to see how devoted the ex-slaves are to their 'white folks,' as they call them. Their admiration and affection for

them seems unbounded, and the master and mistress evidently appreciate and reciprocate the affection of their former slaves. I had heard so much of the lash and of the master's brutality to his slaves that I was astounded to learn that the ex-slaves I have seen have never felt a blow or suffered a moment for food, shelter, or any comfort, and I feel sure that no possible temptation could be put before them that would induce them to leave their former owners. Then, too, what may also surprise you, the old negro speaks of all his race, himself included, as 'niggers,' never saying 'negro' or 'colored man.'

"Nothing that we have ever heard or read of southern hospitality has exaggerated or even equaled the reality, and I am sure that the people under whose roof I am an honored and grateful guest, were never brutal or unkind to a slave or to any other person.

"They are proud, it may be said, almost to haughtiness, but it requires but a glance to tell that my host is a gentleman in the broadest and best sense of that term, and that his wife is a gracious and cultured lady. As I have already said, I have every reason to believe that they are true representatives of a class that you and I have been taught to believe lived in an atmosphere of cruelty and tortured slaves to gratify brutal instincts.

"While my views as to the evils and injustice of slavery have not undergone any

change, and most likely will not, I freely confess, my dear wife, that my opinions of southern slaveholders and the relations existing between them and their former slaves, have within a few hours undergone a radical and revolutionary change, as would yours if you were situated as I am. What I have seen and heard and felt within the past eighteen hours, has been so utterly different from what I had ever dreamed to be within the range of possibility, has been so surprising, so agreeable and so instructive, and has had the effect so to overturn preconceived opinion, that it has left me in a state of mind difficult to describe.

“ However, my dear wife, I am, as I have said, most delightfully situated, and what is more, I have reason to believe I will be able while here to bring to a successful end the mission upon which I came, and be able to learn the fate of those who were so dear to us. Trusting this expectation may be realized, and wishing that you were here to share with me the delightful hospitality and society I am enjoying, I am, most affectionately your husband,

“ EDWARD B. STANDWICK.”

CHAPTER IV

WHEN his letter was finished, Mr. Standwick went out into the genial sunshine. The heavy frost had vanished, the sun shone brightly from a cloudless sky, and the air was crisp and bracing. He found Ned basking in the sunshine on the front steps.

“ Well, Ned, you seem to be a gentleman of elegant leisure.”

“ Well, boss, ef dat means I ain’t got much ter do, you is right. I ain’t got so mighty much ter do, 'cept ter go ober ter de fiel' now an’ den ter see how dem free niggers is gittin’ erlong pickin’ cotton. Dey is pow’ful aggervatin’, 'speshully dese new niggers. De ole niggers w’ut b’longed ter Marster 'fo’ de wah ’ll wu’k, but dese young an’ sorter eddi-cated niggers is scan’lous lazy an’ triflin’.”

“ But you must make allowance for them; they will do better when they get more education and become more like the white folks.”

“ Dat’s gwine ter be a long time, boss. Mebbe it’ll be so some er dese days, but you ner me ain’ gwine ter lib ter see it. De onlies’ niggers w’ut’s any good ter wu’k now is de ole-time 'fo’-de-wah niggers, w’ut wouldn’ know a letter in de book f’um a

buggy wheel. De mo' you eddicates dese young new niggers, de less 'count dey is. Mebbe ef you give 'em heap er l'arnin' so dey kin l'arn de udder niggers in de big schools, it 'll do 'em good; but w'ut li'l' haid-l'arnin' an' book-l'arnin' dey gits now jes' spiles 'em fer fiel'-han's, an' dats all dey fitten fer."

" Well, Ned, you must admit that education will improve anybody."

" No, sah; it ain' improve na'y nigger dat ever I see yit. De Yankee army ain' hardly lef' heah 'fo' a lot er white 'omans come down heah fum de Norf an' 'mence ter teach dese young niggers ter read an' write. Dey say dey gwine ter 'elervate' 'em—I b'liebe dat's de wu'd dey spoke. Well, some er dem young niggers was sharp ez er briar, an' dey l'arn ter write quick; den dey quit school, an' dey write too much. Dey han's an' dey hails b'en eddicated, but dey hearts ain't nebber b'en tetch'd, an' dey was wuss off 'an dey was widout eddication, 'ca'se dey ain't think nuttin' 'tall er writin' some white man's name ter er note er ter er order on de stoah w'en dey wan' money er goods, an' jes' lots men went ter de pen'tenshy fer fo'g'ry. Boss, I tell you de truff, dar's 'nuff ha'f-eddi-cated niggers in de pen'tenshy fum dis county fer writin' some odder man's name on notes an' orders, ter wu'k dis plan'ashun. Dat's er fack, an' anybody 'll tell you so w'ut libs 'roun' dese parts. I hope some er dese days dey 'll

eddicate niggers diff'unt dan w'ut dey do now, 'ca'se dey ain' doin' 'em no good de way dey gibs 'em l'arnin' now."

"Why, you don't seem to have a very high opinion of your own race. We have some colored people in the North you might like better."

"Now, boss, 'scuse me, but please, sah, don' misonnerstan' me. I ain' got nothin' 'tall 'g'inst mah race. I'se a nigger jes' lak de balluns on 'em, an' I know dey ain' had much chance, an' I ain' er blamin' 'em er 'busin' 'em; but dar ain' much diff'unce 'twix' niggers. Boss, I 'speck you gwine ter be heah fer sebb'ul days an' I spec I gwine ter talk er heap ter you 'bout niggers, speshully 'bout yaller niggers, an' I hope you gwine ter on-nerstan' me.

"I don' mean ter say dat all de niggers is mean er triflin', 'ca'se dey ain' by er long shot. Dar is lots er good niggers, an' wu'kkin' niggers an' hones' niggers, but dar's a lot wu't won' wu'k an' it ain' ve'y s'prizin', 'ca'se dey al'ays b'en tuk keer ob; dey ain' had ter think fer deyselves, an' 'ca'se it look lak ter dem dat de white folks didn' wu'k, dey think dey mustn' wu'k, 'ca'se dey's free.

"Dar's good yaller niggers, too, but in ginurl dey ain' no 'count. It 'pears lak dey got all de bad p'ints er dey daddy an' mammy, an' none er dey good uns; but some un 'em is good niggers. I heah white folks say de

'cepshun proob de rule, but I cain't onnerstan' dat kin' er talk. How somepin' w'ut ain't somepin' kin proob somepin' ter be so, is too much fer me; but howsomebber dat may be, er yaller nigger er a black nigger is a nigger. Boss, sho' 's you's bo'n, dar's a mighty big diff'unce 'twix' er white man an 'er nigger, mo' 'n dey is, ef dat kin be, 'twix' Marster an' one er dem san'lappers ober yon'er in de pine woods.

"Look at de foot ob a quality-man, lak Marster! Ef he put his bar' foot on de groun', it don' tetch nowhar 'ceptin' de heel an' de ball er de foot 'hin' de big toe, but de holler ob a nigger's foot mek a hole in de groun'.

"I ain't got no eddication, neider de langwidge ter 'splain w'ut I mean, but I don' mean nuttin' 'gin mah race. Dey ain' ter blame fer bein' ez dey is; but it 'll be er long time 'fo' dey is gwine ter lib lak white folks. I see niggers come right f'um Afferky whar niggers b'en free sence Adam was bo'n, an' soon dey git heah dey 'mence lookin' fer snakes ter eat an' gwine on 'bout 'hoodoo' an' 'voodoo,' an' de lak er dat.

"Dar ain' no mo' use er tryin' ter run de guberment wid niggers 'an 'tis ter try ter beat er thurrerbred wid er plow-hoss. 'Fo' de wah Marster mighty nigh run de guberment, an' mek mos' er de laws, an' 'bout two hundred niggers was mekin' cotton an' co'n on dis

place; but now w'en 'lection day come dey all quit de fiel' 'cept a few ole niggers, an' bre'k off ter town ter vote, an' dey don' know no mo' 'bout w'ut dey doin' dan er house-cat know 'bout playin' er pianny."

"Why do you say 'niggers,' Ned? Why not say 'negroes,' or 'colored folks'?"

"'Ca'se I calls 'em w'ut dey is, an' w'ut dey calls deyselves. Boss, you go down yon'er ter de quarters an' ax a'y nigger you see whar some udder nigger is, an' he gwine ter say, 'Dat nigger right here som'er's,' er 'Dat nigger jes' gone'; howsomebber it may be, an' ef dey gits ter fightin', which dey in ginurly does, an' you ax w'ut's de matter, de nigger you ax 'll say, 'Jes' a lot er dem niggers fightin'.' I don' mean no disrespec' ter 'em by callin' 'em niggers, but far as de niggers whar you lib is consarn, boss, I done al'ays 'serb dat er nigger's er nigger, whedder he lib in de Norf er de Souf, er de Eas' er de Wes'. I b'en in de Norf, an' I see plenty er niggers dar, an' dey jes' lak udder niggers, 'cept dey call deyselves free."

"When were you in the North?"

"Boss, I b'en dar mighty nigh ebber' year 'fo' de wah. Marster and Miss Ma'y go up dar to N' Yawk an' Nagry Falls an' Cannery, an' tek Hester an' me erlong ter wait on 'em, an' I see lots er niggers."

"Why didn't you stay there and be free? Didn't you know you could have done that?"

" Yes, sah; I knowed dat; but w'ut I wanter stay fer? Marster an' Miss Ma'y wa'n't gwine stay, an' I know I ain' gwine be siperate' f'um Marster, an' I sw'ar Hester gwine die 'fo' she le'be Miss Ma'y, so dar you is. Ef mah Marster ain't gwine stay, neider mah Mistiss, nur mah wife, I sho' ain't gwine stay.

" Dar wa'n't na'y nigger I see up dar well off ez me; an', boss, I wanter tell you de currissest thing dat ebber was. I seed one li'l' didapper yaller nigger up dar waitin' on de table at de hotel. He was mighty nigh white, an' he axed me ef I was gwine back to de Souf wid Marster. I say ob co'se; I got er good house an' plenty ter eat an' ter w'ar, an' my Marster an' Mistiss gwine tek good keer er me ef I was sick de res' er mah life. I gwine back an' I mighty glad ter go at dat. Den he say, 'Mebbe I come ter de Souf some er dese days, an' ef I do mebbe I call ter see dat purty young lady w'ut you call Miss Lucy.' 'W'ut dat you say?' I ax him—I cain't b'liebe I onnerstan' him right. Den he say, ' I sayed ef I go ter de Souf mebbe I call on yo' purty young mistiss. I mighty nigh white ez anybody, an' ain't I tolerbul good lookin'?'

" Den, boss, I got mad thu' an' thu'. I looked at dat nigger fer er minnit jes' lak rattlesnake look at cat squ'r'l ter cha'm him; den I say, ' You damn little yaller fool! '

Boss, I chu'ch member an' say mah pra'rs, but I fergit my 'ligion dat time. I say, ' You talk 'bout callin' on mah young mistiss, an' I'll git my han's on yer, an' ef I do I'll crack yer neck. I tell yer right now, nigger, you's 'lectioneerin' fer a fun'al,' an' I lef' him right dar, an' I ain't never speck ter see him erg'in; but I did, an' whar it was I see him, you reckon? "

" Really, I have no idea."

" I seed him right heah on dis place, an' he was heah w'en de nigger so'gers lak ter bu'n dis ve'y house. It was de time w'en Marse Arthur Stan'ick, dat was er 'Fed'rit cap'n, an' Cap'n Chawles Stan'ick, who was er Yankee cap'n, meet right heah jest atter Cap'n Chawles an' his mens done sabe dis house.

" Dat sho' was a turrerbul time, boss; de wuss' time I ebber seed sence I was bo'n. Dey sot fiah ter dis house whar Marster fotch Miss Ma'y w'en she was de beauterfullest bride dat ebber was in de worl'; all dey chillun was bo'n in it, an' all de picters ob dey gran' kin-folks was in dar. Marse Alf'ed an' Marse Willyum dat was kilt in de wah laid right in dar in de parlor in dey coffins, an' mah boy Tom w'ut was kilt in de wah 'long er his Marse Willyum laid in dar in his coffin.

" Miss Lucy died right in dar an' de angels was er waitin' fer her. She was too purty an' too sweet ter lib on de yearth, an' God sont de

angels atter her an' tuk her fer hisse'f, an' spite er all dat, dem niggers sot fiah ter dis ve'y house; but thank de Lawd dey didn' bu'n it. Cap'n Chawles an' his mens got heah an' put out de fiah, an' his mens did sho' pile up dem nigger so'gers."

If Ned had not been so moved in his recital by the memory of that day of horror he might have noticed that when he mentioned the names of Arthur and Charles Stanwick, his guest started as if he had received a shock; but he almost instantly recovered his composure, and a close observer could have seen on his face an expression of relief that amounted almost to joy.

"How did the two captains chance to meet, and how did Captain Charles save the house?" Mr. Standwick asked.

"Well, boss, dat's a long story, an' I 'bleeged ter go in de fiel' now, an' see w'ut dem free niggers is er doin'; but ef you please, sah, I'll tell you dat story ter-morrer er de nex' day."

"Very well, I will excuse you of course; but here comes a colored boy with a note."

Approaching them with his hat in his hand, the boy said,

"Colonel Marshall tol' me ter brung dis heah an' gib it ter you, Unker Ned, an' tell you ter gib hit ter de gen'man w'ut's stayin' heah." Ned took the note and handed it to Mr. Standwick, who read it as follows:

"My dear Mr. Standwick: My grandson is much better, but his father and mother are anxious to have us remain, and as Mrs. Marshall is not very well, we will not be home to-night. I sincerely regret that I shall not have the pleasure of being with you to-night, but Ned will go over and bring my friend, Captain Alston, to spend the night with you, and as you are to remain with us for several days yet, the pleasure of your society for another evening is not lost, only postponed. Captain Alston and my deputies, Ned and Hester, will see that you are well taken care of.

"Very cordially,
"HAMILTON MARSHALL."

"The Colonel will not be home to-night," Mr. Standwick announced, when he had finished reading the letter.

"Is dat so? I sho'ly hope little Marster ain't no wuss."

"Oh, no, he is better; but his parents wish Colonel and Mrs. Marshall to stay, and the Colonel says Mrs. Marshall is not very well."

"I 'spec' so much ridin' an' anzi'ty 'bout her onlies' gran'son done mek Miss Ma'y kinder weak. I sho' do hope she don' be tuk sick dar. Ef she do, Hester gwine right dar ef she hatter walk, an' den dis husban' er hern gwine ter foller her. You cain't tie me 'way ef my Mistiss be sick. I gwine tek Marster'

saddle-hoss atter dinner, an' go over an' fetch Cap'n Als'on ter see you, an' spen' de night.

"He sho' is a mighty fine man. He speak saft, an' he pow'ful perlite; but Lor', boss, he sho' is a fighter. Dey say de way he fit endurin' er de wah was a caushun, an' hit won' do ter fool wid him now nuther. One white man done foun' dat out ter his sorrer, an' lots er 'citemen't an' trubbel come outen dat white man foolin' 'long er Captain Angus Als'on."

"How was that?" asked Mr. Standwick.

"'Scuse me, boss, I gwine tell yer 'bout dat 'fo' long; but it's er long tale, an' ef I starts now you gwine ter miss yer dinner, an' Hester an' Dinah—dat's de cook—done spread dey-selves ter gib you a dinner f'um erway back. Bein's how you's a stranger f'um de Norf, dey wanter l'arn you sumpin' 'bout our folks kin' er eatin'."

"Well, I have already learned much and am willing to learn more. I am sure there could be no more pleasant education."

"Well, boss, you jes' walk in de house an' mek yo'se'f ter home, an' I step down in de cotton-fiel' er few minnits an' see 'bout dem free niggers, an' 'g'inst I git back dinner be ready."

Mr. Standwick was adding a few lines to the letter to his wife, when Ned came in and bowed profoundly. "Dinner am ready. Walk in, sah!"

Mr. Standwick was astounded. A veri-

table feast had been spread, enough for a score, yet so delicately cooked and tastefully served was it, that it tempted the appetite, and provoked liberal indulgence.

When Mr. Standwick had finished his dinner and was sipping a delicious cup of coffee, and inhaling its delightful aroma, he said to Hester,

"Madam, you are a wonderful cook." Hester put her apron to her face and endeavored with only moderate success to suppress a laugh at being addressed as "madam," but her training enabled her to regain her composure, and she replied,

"Much erbleeged ter yer, sah; but I hope you 'scuse me, sah, but I'd ruther you'd call me Hester; dat's mah name."

"Why, are you not a married woman, Ned's wife?"

"Yes, sah, dat's so; but yer know it's all in bein' usen ter sumpin. I ain't usen ter 'madam,' an' I is usen ter Hester; an' den, sah, I ain't de cook. No, indeed, sah, I jes' super'ten'. De cook's name Dinah."

"Well, I would like to see the cook who cooked this elegant dinner; may I see her, Ned?"

"Yes, sah; I 'speck she'll come; I dunno fer sho'. She pow'ful modes' an' skittish, but she sho' is er cook ter beat de ban'! She so black, charcoal mek a white mark on her face, an' de chickens go ter roos' w'en she go in

de hen'-ous'; but de way she kin cook do tek de day, an' I gwine ter call her." Stepping to the door of the kitchen, Ned called, "Dinah, come here right now!"

"W'ut you want er me, Ned?" replied a voice from the kitchen.

"De gen'man say he wan' see de cook w'ut cook dis fine dinner."

"Whoopee! I sho'ly mus' 'spon' ter dat call," and a black woman stepped into the doorway of the dining-room, almost filling it with her generous avoirdupois. Her ebony countenance was in striking contrast with the turkey-red bandanna which surmounted her head, and on seeing Mr. Standwick she dropped a curtsy. "I ve'y much 'bleeged fer de praise er me, sah; I'se pow'ful proud."

"You certainly deserve the praise; you are a great cook. If you would go North you could get large wages."

"Yes, sah, mebbe so; but den my white folks wouldn't be dar, en' I cain't leave Marster an' Miss Ma'y. B'en cookin' fer dem forty year, an' 'speck ter keep on twell I die."

"You colored people are strange folks to me. You have been slaves all your lives, liable to be whipped and sold, and badly treated, and yet you seem to love those who kept you in slavery as if they were your parents."

"Li'bul fer what, boss?" said Ned.

" Li'bul ter be whipped? Ef dar's a stripe
big ez a brumstraw on a'y nigger in dis room
I 'gree ter wuk fer you de res' er my life.
Nobody ain't never tetch na'y one er we-uns,
an' dar wa'n' 'nuff gol' in de Newnited States
ter get Marster ter sell eider one er de th'ee
in slav'y time. An' does you know, boss, dat
neider Hester er me er Dinah is ebber seed de
day w'en we didn't had plenty ter eat an' ter
w'ar. Ef yer don' know it, all de same it's
er fac'.

" Boss, you done heahed er heap 'bout de
white folks an' niggers down heah in de Souf
w'ut ain't so; an' we-uns all is glad you come
down dis way so you kin see fer yers'e'f."

" I am glad too that I came, Ned. I am
ready to believe anything good you say about
Colonel and Mrs. Marshall; but your love of
those who kept you in slavery puzzles me."

" Boss, 'twan't dey fault. Dey tuk us lak
dey foun' us. Dey ain't mek us slaves, an'
dey done de bes' dey could wid us, an' Gawd
knows dey wuz good an' kin' ter all dey
niggers."

" I am sure that is true, because I know
they could not be unkind to any one. Now I
am greatly obliged for this splendid dinner
and I want each of you to take this little gift,"
and he laid a small gold piece in the palm of
each of the three.

Ned and Hester bowed and thanked him,
while Dinah dropped a curtsy and continued

to bow until Mr. Standwick reached the door, and then she said, "Boss, ter-morrer I gwine ter git you a dinner sho' 'nuff. Yer ain't seed no dinner yit. I gwine ter put de li'l' pot in de big un an' den you'll see a sho-'nuff quality-folks dinner, fer I'se gwine ter show you mah serbility ez er cook. I gwine ter bergin ter crupt up de 'gregunces dis ebenin'." And with this deliverance in what to the southern ear was an entirely familiar dialect, but which to Mr. Standwick was a wholly foreign tongue, Dinah withdrew to her kitchen and the guest went into the sitting-room, wondering if it were possible for her to excel the dinner he had already enjoyed.

CHAPTER V

MR. STANDWICK returned to the sitting-room, and Ned, after he had finished his dinner, entered the room. "I thought, boss, mebbe you mout lak ter ride eroun' er bit an' see de plan'ashun, sah. Guess yer ain't nebber seed no cotton growin' er bein' picked twell you rid 'cross dis kentry, so I done saddle up de li'l' mar' Redbird fer you. She's er singlefooter f'um taw, an' a saddle-nag dat's hard ter beat, an' I hope you gwine 'joy ridin' her."

"I am very much obliged, Ned, but I will not ride till later in the afternoon. I will go out now and enjoy the evening sunshine, and you can tell me about how Captain Charles saved the house, and about the trouble that came of somebody 'foolin' 'long er Cap'n Als'on,' as you say; and then there is something else I want to learn about, and that is how your son came to be killed in battle and to lie in the parlor in his coffin."

"Well, boss, I cain't tell yer 'bout all dem 'currences dis ebenin', 'ca'se dere won' be time 'nuff; but I kin tell you right smart, en' I'll tell you de res' ter-morrer er nex' day."

"Very well, and if you have no objection I had rather hear first about your boy."

"Well, boss, you see Hester an' me ain't

nebber had but one chile, dat was Tom. He was 'bout five year ol'er dan his Marse Willyum. When Marse Willyum was bo'n, Tom he wen' ter de big-house ter see de new baby. He crope up to'rds de baid right easy, an' Miss Ma'y seed him, an' she say right den an' dar, 'Tom, I gwine gib you ter your new young Marster, an' now you b'longs ter him.' Jes' so. W'en der baby got big 'nuff ter trus' him ter Tom, Tom set by de cradle an' rock it, an' some time he lif' de baby an' mek him laff. An' heap er times w'en de baby be 'sleep an' smile in he sleep 'ca'se de angels be whisp'in' ter him, Tom jes' clap he han's an' say, 'Ain't he de purties' baby dat you ebber see, daddy?'

"W'en de baby could toddle 'roun' Tom was a tolerbul sizerbul chap an' er right good nuss, an' de two growed up tergedder; an' dey paddle in de branch, an' dey climb trees, an' dey go swimmin', an' dey sho' was lak two brudders. Tom did set a stoah by his young Marster. He nebber done er thing 'ceptin' play wid him, an' dey was de mischievousist pa'r dat ebber yer see in all de bo'n day er yer life. Dey weren't mean. Dey didn't lie, but dey was up ter all kin' er boy pranks an' projickin's.

"Dey wen' swimmin' 'g'inst orders, an' dey git in er hurry an' tu'n dey sh'ts wrong side out'ards, an' run sticks right fas' back'rds an' fur'uds thu' dey ha'r ter dry it; den Miss

Ma'y gin 'em bofe a curr'in' wid er peach-tree sprout. Dey rid Marster's saddle-hosses, an' dey lots er times clum' er hunderd feet atter a coon or a squ'r'l, an' you nebber see 'em sip'rated. W'en Marse Willyum went off ter de 'cademy Tom went wid him, an' w'en he went ter de wah Tom went wid him."

"Do you say your son went to the army with Colonel Marshall's son?"

"Yes, sah."

"Was your boy killed on the battlefield?"

"Yes, sah; he was kilt wid his arms 'roun' his young Marster."

"Do you tell me that people like Colonel Marshall and his wife made your son go to war and fight against his friends who were fighting to give him freedom?"

"How dat, boss? 'Scuse me, please, sah, but I r'ally don' onnerstan' w'ut yer mean. Mek him go? Lor' bless yer soul, boss, you couldn't er tied him wid er trace-chain ef his Marse Willyum had gone an' lef' him. He didn't gone ter fight, he went ter wait on his young Marster; but he would er fit ef his Marse Willyum had er tole him."

"Do you mean he would have fought the northern soldiers as his young master did; that he would have fought men who were trying to set him free?"

"Of co'se, sah. He gwine ter do w'ut-ebber his young Marster say fer him ter do:

an' den I dunno so well 'bout his fightin' 'g'inst his freedom. Ez I onnerstan' de bus'-ness, de Feddul so'gers didn' sot out ter free de niggers. I heahed Marster say how dat Mr. Linkum, who Marster say was a pow'ful good man, sayed one time dat ef dese folks down here 'ud quit fightin' an' come back inter der Newnyun lak dey was 'fo' dey ber-gin ter fight, dat dey mout keep dey niggers; but howsomebber dat mout er b'en, dar ain't no pusson made mah boy go ter de wah.

" Marster ner Miss Ma'y wouldn't er sont him 'ceptin' Hester an' me was both willin' an' Tom wanter go hisse'f, 'ca'se Miss Ma'y tole me so. Tom wanter go, an' w'en he come back wid his Marse Willyum dey was bof ob 'em in dey coffins.

" De so'gers put 'em in de ground right whar dey died, an' mark de place, an' after de wah Marster fetched 'em both home, an' dey lay side berside in de parlor, an' dey sleep side berside over yon'er on de hill. De paper in town done print all 'bout mah boy gwine ter de wah wid his young Marster, an' 'bout how he was kilt, an' Miss Ma'y an' Marster heap er times reads it ter me. I got it in de bottom er my chis' in mah house, an' ef you 'scuse me I'll go an' git it, an' I be much erbleeged ef you'll read it ter me."

" Certainly, I will read it to you gladly. I have no doubt it will be an interesting story."

" Boss, it ain't no story, it's de sollum fac'.

It tetches mah heart 'ca'se it's 'bout how mah boy died, an' how he kep' his wu'd."

"Oh, I understand. I don't doubt your word, nor doubt the truth of what has been printed. I mean it is a true story of noble deeds."

"You's right, boss, fer it sho'ly is."

The negro soon returned with a broad piece of cardboard on which was pasted a piece of newspaper a column or more in length. He held it as carefully as if every letter had been a diamond, and well he might, for on no record of heroism was there ever graven the recital of sublimer courage, more unselfish devotion, or nobler fidelity to duty.

He handed the priceless treasure to Mr. Standwick, who read it as follows:

"' A TRAGEDY OF THE WAR.

"' Since the war began there have been many noble young lives offered up in defense of the South, many hearts saddened, and many homes darkened, but with the gloom there has been blended much of glory, and this good county has had her share of both. But there is something peculiarly pathetic and glorious in the death of young William Marshall, who fell in battle a few days ago, and the pathos and glory of his fall is intensified by the death, at his side, of his faithful negro body-servant, Tom.

"' William was the youngest son of that

knighthly Christian gentleman, Colonel Hamilton Marshall, who is beloved and revered by the entire citizenship of this State, and the son of as noble a mother as ever gave her beloved children to their country, a representative southern woman, the highest type of womanhood.

" William was born and reared in this county, and was a handsome, noble young fellow, worthy of the stock from which he descended, and than this, praise can find no higher expression.

" The day that he was eighteen years old, his mother, in whose veins flows the blood of generations of gentlemen and heroes, said to him, " William, my son, you are eighteen to-day, and your country needs you. Are you ready? " Uncovering himself, he bowed his head and replied, " Yes, mother, I am ready and anxious to go. Brother Hamilton has come home maimed for life, brother Alfred has died in battle, and I must fill the place of one of them. " His mother replied, " Very well, my son, everything is ready. You can leave this afternoon. "

" The haversack, the blankets, everything the young soldier needed or could take, was ready for use, and upon each article had fallen the tears of his heroic mother; but when the crucial hour of sacrifice came, she gave no sign of anguish.

" " Mother, " William said, " may I take

Tom with me? We have never been separated." As everybody in the community knows, Tom was the only son of Ned, the body-servant and carriage-driver of Colonel Marshall, and Hester, his wife, the maid and constant attendant of Mrs. Marshall, two negroes who have been always justly respected for their fidelity, good manners, and good character.

" ' Mrs. Marshall replied, " Son, I will not make Tom go, or permit him to go unless he wishes to, and not then unless both his parents consent. I have too much affection for Ned and Hester, and know too well how a mother feels at giving up her boy, to send Tom with you, unless they freely consent. I will call them and let them decide." Mrs. Marshall called to Hester to come at once and bring Ned and Tom with her, and soon the trio, father, mother, and son, appeared, when Mrs. Marshall said, " Ned, I have called you and Hester here to tell you that William is eighteen to-day, and he is going to start to Virginia to join the army, and he wants Tom to go with him; but I will not make Tom go unless both you and Hester are entirely willing, and Tom himself wants to go."

" ' Tom stood by, the very picture of excitement, interest, and anxiety, and it seemed as if he must speak, but, apparently by a great effort, he restrained himself and waited for his " daddy " to speak first.

“ ‘ ‘ ‘ Miss Ma'y,” said Ned, “ ef Marse Willyum want Tom to go I'se willin', 'ca'se dey never is been sipperated in dey lives. Hester kin speak fer herse'f.” “ Ef Tom want to go I ain't gwine try ter keep him,” agreed Hester. “ It's mighty good er you, Miss Ma'y, ter 'fuse ter sen' him bedout we be willin'. I love Marse Willyum mos' lak I do Tom, an' he kin have Tom erlong wid him in de wah ef he wan' him.” Then Mrs. Marshall said, “ What do you say, Tom?” “ I wants ter go, Miss Ma'y. I don' want Marse Willyum ter le'be me, 'ca'se I ain't gwine stay ef he go bedout me.” Mrs. Marshall said: “ Tom, your Marse Willyum may go into big battles, and you might follow him and get killed.” “ I cain't he'p it, Miss Ma'y; I'd ruther be daid den ter be sipperated f'um Marse Willyum.” “ Well, Tom, you may go.” Whereupon Tom fairly shouted, “ Goody! Marse Willyum an' me gwine ter de wah tergedder. Much erbleeged ter you, daddy an' mammy, an' Miss Ma'y.”

“ ‘ ‘ ‘ Tom,” said Mrs. Marshall, “ come here and kneel, and while my hand lays on your head I want you to make me a promise.”

“ ‘ ‘ The young negro knelt on both knees at the feet of his mistress, with head bowed low, and as he did so Ned and Hester knelt just behind him.

“ ‘ ‘ Mrs. Marshall, laying her hand on

Tom's head, said, " Do you promise me that if your Marse William goes into battle that you will go hunt for him as soon as you can go, and that if you find him wounded, you will stay by him, and never leave him while there is life in his body? "

“ ‘ ‘ I does promise dat, Miss Ma'y, so he'p me Gawd! ”

“ ‘ ‘ God bless you, Tom,” said Mrs. Marshall, “ and help you to keep that promise.” To that wish Ned and Hester responded in unison, with a fervent amen!

“ ‘ ‘ The young soldier and his faithful body-servant went to Virginia, arriving just in time to go into one of the bloodiest battles of the war.

“ ‘ ‘ With throbbing heart Tom watched his slender and boyish-looking, manly young master, as he took his place in line, and the devoted negro trembled as the battle opened with heavy cannonading, followed soon by a deadly musketry fire in the direction of which he saw his master move. The battle raged for more than two hours, but at the first slackening of the fire, Tom started in the direction of the fighting.

“ ‘ ‘ He soon met many stragglers and wounded men, and again and again was directed to go back, but he made no response, and though his face was ashen with fear, his great love for his young master nerved him to heroism of the truest kind—that courage

which, despite terror and seeming imminent death, dares danger.

“ Bullets were thick in the air, the artillery fire was cutting off limbs of trees over his head, and the ground was covered thickly with the wounded, the dying and the dead, but he pressed on.

“ At last he met a member of his master's company whom he knew, and who said to him, “ Go back, Tom, you must not go in there.” The negro replied, “ I boun' ter go, boss; I done promise Miss Ma'y an' I mus' keep my wu'd,” and creeping and dodging and trembling, he went on, and soon he heard near at hand a voice that he would have known among a million.

“ Shot and shell were filling the air with deadly hail, but he knew his master's voice, and it was calling piteously for water. Tom hastened to his side with two canteens with which he had provided himself. What followed in the next few minutes we have from Henry Armistead, a comrade of William's, who lay wounded almost in arm's reach of him.

“ The devoted servant found William wounded beyond hope of recovery, and propped against a large oak in a half-recumbent position. He knelt beside his beloved master and passed his left arm about him. “ Oh, Marse Willyum, thank Gawd I done foun' you! ” and pressed the canteen to the

parched lips of the suffering young soldier, who drank long and deeply, and then said, "Tom, take the other canteen and put it down by Mr. Armistead, and put this one by me, and put my blanket between my body and the tree, and then go back. I have but a little while to live I know, and you can do no more good here. You have been brave and faithful. Tell mother I loved her and will love her in heaven. Tell her I did my duty."

"Tom placed the canteen in reach of Mr. Armistead, and moved him to make him more comfortable, and then returned to his master, and put his arm again about his beloved form, and again the unselfish young soldier said, "Go, Tom; good-by. You will be killed if you stay here. Go back and take my dying message to father and mother. Tell them I loved them to the last."

"Holding yet closer the form of his dying master, Tom said beseechingly, "Marse Willyum, don' mek me go. I never is disobey you in all mah life, but I cain't go now. I done promise Miss Ma'y dat I won' le'be you while dere's life in yer body, an' I mus' keep my wu'd."

"" I know, Tom, you mean to be faithful, and you have been and I love you; but I release you from your promise; go now and bear my message."

"" Marse Willyum, please fer Miss

Ma'y's sake don' mek me go now. You wounded desp'rit, an' I'd ruther die dan le'be you an' go back home an' tell Miss Ma'y I didn't keep my wu'd, but lef' you ter die on de groun' an' nobody ter hol' you er git you er drink er water."

" ' ' ' Tom, it will only be a little while. Go, and God bless you, Tom!"

" ' Tom drew the slender form closer to him, till it rested against his shoulder, and as he wiped away the death damp from the pallid brow he said, " I done promise Miss Ma'y an' I mus' keep my wu'd," and as he spoke he started, his hold for a moment relaxed, and a shudder ran through his frame. The dying master said, " Tom, you are hit; you are wounded, aren't you?" The voice that replied was already husky and feeble. " Yes, Marse Willyum, I'se hit. We's gwine tergedder. We never 'll be sipperated no mo', an' some er dese days up yonder we'll see Miss Ma'y an' you'll tell her dat I kep' my wu'd," and the black arms tightened again in a last loving hold; a quiver passed through the frame of both and each form relaxed and rested against the other, and both against the tree, and from that scene of awful carnage, that field of fratricidal strife the two passed up to God—the white man and the black, master and slave, passed up to tell " Miss Ma'y " and mother of a fidelity unfailing and a love that outlived death.' "

When Mr. Standwick finished reading there were tears in his eyes, and Ned, who had stood with bowed head, looked up and said in earnest, reverent tone,

"Boss, my boy kep' his wu'd; dat's de p'int, he kep' his wu'd. I'd ruther he be over yander, sleepin' by his young Marster, dan fer him be libbin' an' bre'k his wu'd which he gib Miss Ma'y. He kep' his wu'd, dat's de p'int.

"Now, boss, will you please 'scuse me now? My heart is hebby," and as he walked away with bowed head, Mr. Standwick lifted his hat in reverent salutation to the old black hero.

CHAPTER VI

AFTER Ned had gone, Mr. Standwick mounted Redbird and rode across the hills and round and through the plantation.

The evening was clear and cool, the sun shone brightly, there was scarcely a breath of wind, and as Mr. Standwick crossed the narrow bottom which bordered the creek he heard the barking of the gray squirrels, and the long, mournful, songlike note with which, in the fall when they are feeding on nuts, their barking often ends.

From the red oaks and water oaks acorns were dropping, and on the edge of the hill at frequent intervals hickory nuts fell on the thick carpet of leaves, which, touched by the frost, had fallen and left the trees thinly garbed and silhouetted against the sky.

Far down the valley stretched the cotton-field white unto the harvest, and the scene was so novel to the New Englander that he stopped his horse and gazed long upon it; and recalling the events of the past two days he could almost imagine that the forms he saw among the cotton and at the ends of the rows were yet slaves, belonging to the splendid gentleman whom they yet called "master."

By a more direct route, or, as he said, "er short cut," Ned had reached the cotton-field in advance of Mr. Standwick, who found him moving quickly among the pickers, urging them to greater diligence and steadiness in their work. When he saw Mr. Standwick he came to where that gentleman was sitting on his horse.

"I gwine atter Cap'n Als'on. I jes' stop ter look atter dese pickers er li'l' while. Boss, I'se glad you come down ter dis cotton-patch; you kin see how dese free niggers wu'k. Dar's some settin' down at de een' er de row, some er layin' down 'twix' de rows, a whole bunch on 'em ober yander talkin' 'bout polerticks an' votin', an' dey ain't know no mo' 'bout neider one dan er mule does 'bout leadin' er singin'-school. Dar's 'bout er dozen er Marster's ole niggers pickin' stiddy. Did you ebber see de beat er dem udder niggers in yer life? "

"Well, I must admit," said Mr. Standwick, "that they hardly appear to be earning their wages."

"Wages, boss? Dey ain't paid no wages! Dat cotton you see dar, whar er hones' wu'kin' man kin pick th'ee er fo' hundred poun' er day, is dey crop. Half un it b'longs ter 'em. De mo' dey gedders de mo' money dey hab at de een' ob de yeah—but you see how dey does. But you jes' wait twell Sadday come, an' dey all gwine light out fer town ef dey lose er bale er cotton erpiece. Hit's de same

way on ever' plan'ashun, an' fer mah life, I cain't see w'ut's gwine ter become er sich peepul; but I mus' go on atter de Cap'n now, ef you'll 'scuse me."

As Mr. Standwick rode away he said to himself, "I must admit there seems to be much truth in what Ned says. The negro at a distance and near at hand, in theory and in practice, I find a very different being."

When he returned to the house there was a roaring fire in the sitting-room; the dining-room and parlor were brilliantly lighted, and the whole house had an aspect so cheerful, so hospitable, so inviting that Mr. Standwick felt almost as if it were his house beckoning him to all its elegance and comfort.

After a short time, when Captain Alston arrived, Ned escorted him into the house and Mr. Standwick met him at the door of the sitting-room, and the two gentlemen greeted each other cordially. Mr. Standwick was impressed, even at first glance, at his guest, or rather at Ned and Hester's guest, for Captain Alston was a striking-looking man, who quickly and favorably impressed all who met him for the first time.

He was above the average height, slender and well knit. He was straight as an arrow, his voice was soft and finely modulated, and his movements were characterized by ease and grace. His hair, originally black as a raven's wing, was well sprinkled with gray.

His eyes were black, and looked one straight in the face; his mouth indicated frankness and courage of the highest type; but there was in his face an expression which, at frequent intervals, was almost pathetic.

He was courteous and cordial, but by no means effusive in manner. The impression made upon Mr. Standwick was that he had clasped the hand of a gentleman of character and courage, one who had suffered some great sorrow, and who was worthy of the admiration and friendship of Hamilton Marshall. As soon as Captain Alston had removed his top coat he said,

"I am very glad to meet you. I am glad you are in the South, and I am especially glad that you are a guest under this roof, for the world holds no better people than Colonel Marshall and his wife."

"I am very glad to agree with you, Captain," replied Mr. Standwick, "though I have seen very little of them; but certainly never was more considerate and gracious treatment extended a stranger, or more delightful hospitality."

At this juncture, Hester appeared in the door-way, curtsying and nodding. "Howdy do, Marse Cap'n; I sho' is glad ter see you. It's b'en er long time sence we had de good luck ter hab you in dis house." Captain Alston went forward and shook hands with Hester and thanked her, and expressed the hope

that she was well. Had Hester been the first lady of the land, this southern soldier and aristocrat could not have been more unaffectedly and sincerely kind and cordial. Hester assured him that she was "tolerbul," for like all of her race she never admitted that she was altogether well, and she added, "I'se sorry Marster an' Miss Ma'y 'bleeged ter be erway ter-night; but Ned an' me an' Dinah 'll do de bes' we kin."

"I have no fear on that score, Hester," returned Captain Alston. "I have been here too many times to have any doubt whatever of your ability."

"Yes, sah; but yer ain't b'en here no mo' times dan yer was welcome, Marse Cap'n; an' now I mus' ax you an' Mr. Stan'wick ter walk in ter supper."

No meal could have been more delightfully cooked or served, and both gentlemen were sincere in their assurances of appreciation, Mr. Standwick declaring,

"Each meal here is to me a surprise, and such cooking I have never seen."

"That," said Captain Alston, laughing, "has been my experience for thirty years and more. Dinah stands pre-eminent among our colored cooks. No head cook or chef in any café or hotel in the preparation of tempting, appetizing food is in her class at all, and Hester can set the table and serve as can no other servant I have ever seen."

"Thank you, Marse Cap'n; it sho' is mighty kin' in you ter say dat," said Hester.

When the two gentlemen returned to the sitting-room, Captain Alston said: "I was saying when supper was announced that I was glad you were in the South and were the guest of this family, for the South needs now, as never before, to be understood in the North; and those who come from there with all the convictions and prejudices and sympathies of our northern neighbors, can never do better nor learn the truth quicker than by being thrown in contact with such people as your hosts."

"I agree with you heartily, Captain Alston, and I will say to you what I shall unhesitatingly, as an act of justice, say to Colonel Marshall, that so entirely did I misapprehend southern sentiment and the character of southern slave owners that I felt afraid that I would be denied lodgment beneath this roof, when my birth-place and my political convictions were made known. I had read much and heard much from which I drew that conclusion, or which at least suggested that possibility, and when I stood in the cheerful light of the fire in this room and heard Colonel Marshall approach last evening, I felt no small degree of trepidation, and had grave doubt as to my reception and treatment."

"My dear sir," said Captain Alston,

"never was there less cause of apprehension. You were already by the hearthstone of Colonel Marshall's home, and had you been his dearest foe you would not have been driven out into the night; and being a stranger and a traveler wearied by an unusual journey, you became at once the guest of those to whom hospitality is at once a duty and a delight."

"I have," said Mr. Standwick, "often heard and read of such hospitality, but I fear now I was quicker to believe the evil than the good reports of the southern people. I have read some most bitter and cruel attacks upon 'southern aristocracy,' but if Colonel Marshall and his wife are typical representatives of that class, then, here and now I disclaim any belief in what I have either heard or read."

"Mr. Standwick, Colonel Marshall and his wife are representatives of the best society of the South. It is not necessary to call it an aristocracy, because it was not, and is not, aristocracy in the modern sense of that term. No man can buy his way into it, nor does it measure people by a monetary standard. It is an aristocracy of blood and breeding and character, and stands even in its poverty of to-day in hereditary and perpetual rebellion against the social despotism of the dollar. We have, or rather before the war

we *had*, the rich and the poor, of course; nearly all are poor now, but there were rich people who were not in the class to which Colonel Marshall belongs, while many who were not rich were in it, and enjoyed all its social honors, dignities, delights, and privileges."

"What surprises me, Captain Alston, is that such a social system could have existed coincident with slavery, to the idea of which I can never become reconciled. That such people as Colonel and Mrs. Marshall should have owned and kept slaves is to me beyond comprehension. No man can fail to see in an hour that Colonel Marshall is a gentleman of education, liberal culture, thorough breeding and courage, and possessed of that kindness of heart which is essential to constitute a gentleman in the highest sense of that somewhat abused term, while no more gracious, gentle, or charming woman than Mrs. Marshall have I ever seen; yet they are the products of a social and industrial system of which human slavery was, so to speak, the corner-stone, and yet very certainly slavery antagonized the sentiment and conviction of the civilized world."

"Yes, they were slave owners, as were their sires and grandsires before them. They were, so to speak, the victims of circumstances and environment. They received slaves as their legacies, just as people in the North received

bonds, mortgages, and shares of stock, and they could not set them free; if they had, nine-tenths of them would have become tramps and vagabonds on the face of the earth.

"The experience of the last few years has proved that the negroes if set free could not have found homes in the North, because the climate was unsuited to them, as was the character of work done by common laborers; so the people of the South, while they did not prefer slavery and recognized that there were many evils connected with it, and knew that the sentiment of Christian civilization was rapidly crystallizing against it, could not free their slaves, and they knew that no power on earth had the lawful right to take their slaves from them or set them free.

"They knew that the evils of slavery were greatly exaggerated by anti-slavery writers and speakers, because five-sixths of the slaves in the South were better fed, better housed, and better clad than were the common white laborers in the North, and not one in ten of such laborers enjoyed the comforts and freedom from care and anxiety as to the future that the slaves of Colonel Marshall did.

"There were, of course, many, yet in comparison really very few, cruel masters in the South; but that few did much to develop a sentiment here against slavery. Even I, a slaveholder, did not believe in it; but like my neighbors, I was helpless to prevent it. I

would not to-day return the negroes in the South to slavery if I could do so by uplifting my finger, and I know I speak the sentiments of ninety-nine out of every hundred of those in the South who owned slaves.

"Negroes were property, recognized by the Constitution and laws, and I believe, as do all my fellow-countrymen of the South, and as I and they will always believe, that to set the negroes free and to wipe out thousands of millions of dollars of property values without compensation was inexcusable and indefensible in the forum either of morals or of law."

"But, Captain," said Mr. Standwick with some warmth, but in a courteous tone, "the people of America—at least I can speak for the people of New England—were unwilling to see half the nation a land of slavery and see millions of their fellow-men sink lower and lower in the scale of being every year, and see them made beasts of burden in order that their masters might grow rich. Pardon me, I mean no offense. I trust each of us can express his views with perfect candor. I am sure each will do so with kindness and courtesy."

"My dear New England friend," said Captain Alston in a bantering tone, "don't you think it would have been more becoming and consistent in our Puritan friends if they had become indignant and horrified at the

idea of human slavery before they went into the slave trade—or at least before they sold out their stock of negroes to the southern people? We got them from your ancestors because the soil, climate, and the industrial conditions of New England were not congenial to the negro. He failed to pay as an investment, and with characteristic foresight and thrift, which it would be well if we ourselves had more of, the good people of New England, who in matters of finance are never caught napping, got rid of the negro, not by setting him free and washing their hands of the 'awful sin of dealing in human flesh and blood,' as they were wont to say, but by turning him over to us at a good bargain for the sellers. That is a historical truth so well established that no man even pretends to deny it."

"Admitting that to be true," said Mr. Standwick, "it belongs to the past, and I am glad to say that for several generations no human being has been held in slavery in New England, and her past offenses do not justify yours of more recent date."

"Concede that for argument's sake, or even as a fact," returned Captain Alston, "nevertheless, it does appear a little, indeed very inconsistent to us, to see or read that the agitation in the North for the abolition of slavery was almost coincident with the closing out of the last negro by sale to the South.

"Then, as to the negro sinking lower in the scale of being every year, the truth is exactly the reverse. You have heard and read such statements so often that it is not surprising that you should have believed them, but the negro was constantly improving in intelligence and morals.

"The negro in slavery was in the matter of morals and industry and honesty, infinitely the superior of the free negro of the present day. There is no doubt whatever of that fact; but what relative conditions may be twenty years from now, I do not undertake to predict.

"The negro in slavery was allowed Sunday and most often half of Saturday for rest, and nearly every planter provided his slaves with opportunity for worship, and the fidelity of the negro during the war, which was beyond all praise, is the best evidence of his affection for his owners. When the South took the negroes as slaves they were eating snakes and worshiping toads, and when they were set free they were qualified for judges and legislators and congressmen and governors, at least many of them went at once into these positions, and every male negro became at once a voter."

"I know, of course, that they were given the right to vote, Captain Alston; but to say they were put in high offices though they were ignorant and uneducated, is of course an ex-

travagance of speech which should be pardoned, as it possibly illustrates unusual conditions."

"Indeed, sir, it is not a figure of speech; it is the statement of a fact, the unvarnished, undeniable truth. There were during the Reconstruction period scores of legislators, and minor judicial officers like justices of the peace, who could not read or write a word, and ex-convicts were put in high offices, and States already devastated by war-were plundered until they were absolutely bankrupt."

"I had no idea," said Mr. Standwick, "that statements to this effect which I often heard and read were true in fact. I supposed they were merely born of prejudice and passion and that they were made to influence public sentiment in the North against the policy of Reconstruction."

"No, indeed, sir; the conditions to which I have referred were the fruits of Reconstruction, and I refer to them in no spirit of complaint or repining over the past, but merely as matters of historical interest, which will prove of great value as a lesson and a warning to statesmen of the future who may possibly attempt the impossible task of subjecting the intelligent, liberty-loving white man to the domination of men of an inherently and hopelessly inferior race.

"Now, you were, a few minutes ago, expressing surprise that a class of society such

as Colonel and Mrs. Marshall belong to and fitly represent could have been produced under the system of slavery which existed here. The highest guarantee of noble living is a life of freedom and a jealous regard for personal liberty and individual independence of convictions and action, and history attests that they who own slaves have ever most zealously guarded their own liberties, and been quickest to resist aggression and oppression in every form.

"The system of slavery in the South was half patriarchal and half feudal, and despite the evils that were inevitably incident to it, as they must be to human slavery in any form, and to the objections to which it was justly subject, it was best for the negro, though not best for the white man.

"How from such industrial and economic environment there was evolved a social system that produced such men and women as composed that element of southern society which is typified and illustrated in those beneath whose roof we sit, is an inquiry which cannot fail to interest the historian and social philosopher, and the student who inquires into the relation of industrial and economic policies to social conditions and standards.

"That the social system of the South, Mr. Standwick, did produce the highest types of mankind and womankind that have ever lived in any age or in any land, I firmly believe.

The standard here of manly honor and womanly virtue was the highest ever known in any system of society of which there is record in history.

"The standard of honor and manhood in private life was reflected in the public service, and I can recall neither in history nor tradition a single instance where there was in the legislature, in Congress or on the bench, a charge of corruption against a southern official, or a breach of official trust by any office-holder in any Southern State.

"The social, industrial, and economic system which prevailed here produced not only honest, faithful public servants, but men of intellect and culture, and statesmen of the highest type.

"You are, of course, familiar with the controlling influence of southern statesmen in the formation of the new republic, and know the Constitution of the United States, which has justly been said to be the greatest product of the human mind, was the work of southern men and slaveholders. I do not speak of these things in a spirit of boasting, but in defense of a social and industrial system which has often been most unjustly assailed.

"Our northern critics have often said that 'the South, being rid of slavery, with all the demoralizing influences,' would form loftier ideals and rapidly rise to a higher standard of civilization and society, but they err in

making this statement. She never will—because she cannot. There are none.

"Say what you will of slavery, and remember, I am not seeking to justify or defend it, judged by the men and women the last century has produced in the South; measured by the tests of honor and courage and intellect and patriotism of the one, and the refinement, purity, and social charms and graces of the other, here in the South, where slavery existed, civilization reached the highest point ever attained.

"This may sound to you as extravagant and paradoxical, and you may wholly dissent from my views; yet, nevertheless, what I have said is true. The South will preserve and adhere to her ancient social faiths and standards, for there are none higher. Her men and her women, in time of peace, prosperity and plenty, and in time of war and adversity and want, have held unseduced to the social and political faiths once delivered to the fathers, and thereby challenged the admiration of universal humanity.

"I trust you will acquit me of unbecoming vanity in so extolling a system to which I bear so intimate a relation, but my statements are impersonal, and in support of them I desire to give you some high and disinterested testimony.

"You will remember that Mr. Thackeray, the English novelist, came to America on a

visit about 1853. He visited New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, and met many of the cultured, refined, and splendid people of those great cities. He was the guest of a distinguished citizen of Philadelphia who was a few years afterward the diplomatic representative of the United States at the court of one of the great Oriental nations, and who wrote a memoir of Mr. Thackeray, a most charming piece of literature. In the course of the memoir he spoke of the horror he said he was sure Mr. Thackeray felt at the war between 'brethren speaking the same dear tongue'—the late war between the States,—because he said Mr. Thackeray had visited southern homes and shared southern hospitality and had met southern ladies and gentlemen, 'the highest types of American civilization.'

"I appreciate the sturdy character of the Puritans and esteem them for their many admirable qualities, but they are prone to speak patronizingly of us of the South. Sometimes it seems to me there is too much of the 'I am holier than thou' spirit in their utterances, but I do not include you, Mr. Standwick, in my indictment. I believe you will do us justice when you return.

"We have our faults and our vices, but frankness and courage and candor are characteristics of the people of the South. They have none of the genius of indirection, they

neither practise nor know the arts of hypocrisy.

" We owned slaves, they were our property; but we would not have fought for their value and did not. We fought because our land was unlawfully invaded, and the perpetuation or extinction of slavery was a mere incident. We have endured much, but have made no complaint. We ask no pity, seek no sympathy, crave no pardon. Confessed necessity for pardon involves consciousness of guilt, and we are conscious of neither moral nor political guilt, unless it be guilt to defend our homes and firesides against unjustifiable invasion, and to battle as we are now battling to overthrow negro domination, and restore the white man to his rightful possession. We stand for the eternal supremacy of the white man and assert the physical, moral, intellectual and ethnological inferiority of the negro.

" The madness and folly of the present hour will pass away; this frenzy of fanaticism about the negro and his ' rights and sufferings ' will in a generation become but a memory, and the South treading now alone the wine press of sorrow will be Heaven's favored land, and the last and safe refuge and hope for free democratic government on this continent.

" We admit neither the moral nor social superiority of any people in the world. If

you could gather in this house to-morrow the husbands, wives, sons and daughters of a hundred families of the class to which your host and hostess belong, you could not in point of culture, good breeding, intellectual accomplishments, manly honor, womanly virtue and social charms and graces match that gathering in any land on all the earth. You would see there the products and exponents of the golden age socially—the apotheosis of Christian civilization.

“Mr. Standwick, I feel as if I owed you an apology for monopolizing the conversation, but the subject is one in which I feel deeply. From heartcore to finger tip I am a southern man, and if I have allowed my feelings to betray me into any utterance that could possibly in the slightest degree give you offense, I crave your forgiveness.

“I have spoken with unrestrained freedom because I believe you are capable of appreciating the conditions which now confront us and the motives which prompted us in the past and those which prompt us now; and that while you may never agree with us upon many questions and policies, that you will do us justice and give us credit for sincerity of conviction and purpose.”

“Captain Alston, it is not necessary that I should agree with you in order that I should, as I do, respect your opinions; and your pride in and devotion to your native South

challenges my admiration. This much I say. Any social system that produced such people as Hamilton Marshall and Mary Marshall could not have been as full of evil as I have been taught to believe the South was. No evil tree could possibly have produced such splendid fruit. I hope and believe I understand better than I have ever done, the position of the southern people upon many questions."

" Permit me, Mr. Standwick, to speak a few words in defense of the South upon one point. You spoke of slaves being made beasts of burden by cruel southern masters. Do you know that it was throughout the entire South a matter of common knowledge that in ninety-nine instances out of a hundred, where a slave owner was peculiarly and unusually unkind and cruel, who half fed and half clothed his slaves, and who exacted extreme and cruel tasks of them, that owner, when traced back to his place of birth, was found to be a northern man?

" You will understand, of course, that I do not mean by this that the average northern man is naturally more unkind or cruel than his brother man in the South; but what I have stated was attributable to two facts. First, the northern man invariably acquired his negroes by purchase and not by inheritance, as was the case with the majority of the largest southern slave owners, and he knew

nothing of the ties of interest and affection which existed between those owners who had reared their slaves or been reared from childhood with them. In the second place, the northern man had been lured to the South by the glowing tales he had heard of the rapid road to riches that farming with slave labor opened,—by the way, a most erroneous idea,—and he had heard exaggerated and untruthful reports of how slaves were worked and had an idea that they could stand on scant rations all that beasts of burden could, and that there was no limit to their ability to labor; and he worked them according to those false conceptions, and the result was that he was a far more exacting master than was his southern neighbor, and his slaves were slaves indeed. I can furnish you strong testimony on this point, testimony furnished by a witness who certainly cannot be said to have been biased in favor of the South.

“ In Colonel Marshall’s library I see a book which you have doubtless seen, one that fanned the sparks of sectional strife and bitterness into a consuming flame and ‘ wrought woes unnumbered,’ ‘ Uncle Tom’s Cabin.’ Whether it so occurred by accident or inadvertance, or whether for a purpose Mrs. Stowe so designed it, the hardest, most cruel and unworthy character in that remarkable book, Legree, was born in the North and came South and trafficked in slaves and mal-

treated them; while the two most lovable and admirable characters, Uncle Tom and Eva, were reared amid slavery, one having been a slave, the other his young mistress."

"I have, of course, read the book," said Mr. Standwick, "but really your statement is a revelation to me. I had not read the book so carefully."

"Well, you will find it to be as I say, and whether it be the result of inadvertance or design it is a remarkable fact."

The conversation between the Puritan and the Cavalier, though long continued and most earnest, was conducted with the courtesy to be expected of gentlemen of intelligence and good breeding who are guests under the same roof, and they separated for the night with sincere respect each for the other.

CHAPTER VII

AFTER breakfast next morning, Captain Alston said that he must excuse himself, as he had engagements at home which must be met; but Hester having overheard his remarks came quickly to the door of the sitting-room and said,

"Marse Cap'n, you sho'ly ain't gwine ter go befo' dinner. Dinah gwine ter spread herse'f ter-day an' give de nordern gent'man a dinner fer true, an' you mus' stay an' eat wid him. We will sho'ly be diserp'ited ef you don't. Yer ain't b'en ter see us ez many times lately as we spected, an' bein's you b'en so good ez ter come, you mus' stay ter dinner, fer Dinah 'll be sho' frustrated ef you leabe."

Captain Alston could not resist so hospitable and evidently so sincere an invitation, and consented to stay. Hester advised Ned of Captain Alston's acceptance of her invitation, and Ned at once saddled Redbird and Colonel Marshall's saddle-horse and brought them to the door, and when the gentlemen appeared on the front gallery he said,

"Marse Cap'n Als'on, I t'ought you an' Mr. Stan'wick mout lak ter tek a ride dis fine mawnin'; an' ef you do you know dar's

two er de bes' ridin' nags a gent'man ebber flung his laig ober, an' dey's fa'rly chawmpin' dey bits fer ter go."

"Good, Ned," said Captain Alston. "I should like to ride with Mr. Standwick across the country." Mr. Standwick falling readily into the idea, the two gentlemen were soon off for a morning jaunt.

They rode through a part of the country which Mr. Standwick had not been over; but there, as elsewhere within a radius of many miles, were to be seen the depressing and distressing evidence of vandalism and wanton destruction of property. At rare intervals some humble house had been spared; but such instances were few, and there were in many places rude structures standing where once had stood splendid mansions. On every side were evidences of ingenious endeavors to rebuild, out of crude material, burned fences and farm houses, and of a struggle against poverty and adversity that was pathetic in its heroism. After riding in absolute silence more than a mile, Mr. Standwick said,

"It certainly was not necessary or justifiable to spread such destruction and devastation as this. If there be such a thing as civilized and Christian warfare, which terms are in my judgment contradictory and absurd, this certainly does not come within that definition. The warfare conducted here was barbaric and a reproach to the great nation

whose soldiers were responsible for the ruin and desolation I see around me."

"You know," said Captain Alston, "that I have, when I reflected calmly upon these things which you see to-day, wondered whether those who live where you do and think of the war from your point of view really knew what vandalism and barbarism marked the path of the northern army in the South."

"I certainly did not; I desire to say most emphatically that I did not," Mr. Standwick replied.

"The ruin and devastation of houses and fences and mills and all the appurtenances belonging to farms and plantations was fearful," said Captain Alston; "but in the course of time such losses can be replaced, but in very many instances all the family supplies were destroyed. The cattle and hogs were killed, and when the homes were burned the old men and women and children, mothers and grandmothers and grandfathers, stood by the smouldering ruins of their homes, penniless, shelterless and hungry, and many of such sufferers were people who not only had never known poverty or want, but had always been accustomed to prodigal luxury. I do not recall the past to renew bitter memories, but only that you, who I believe are seeking the truth, may know all the facts."

"I have," said Mr. Standwick, "often

read of such conditions, but could not believe they ever in fact existed; but since I have been here and have seen for myself, I am entirely willing to believe that indeed 'the crow that flew over this country would have been obliged to carry his rations.' "

"Comparisons are said to be odious, but I cannot refrain from saying, Mr. Standwick, that as a southern man I take much pride in and derive much consolation from the fact that no such deeds as caused this fearful desolation marked the pathway of the southern army in Pennsylvania. The southern soldier who was guilty of such vandalism would have been shot in an hour."

"Your pride is entirely justifiable, Captain Alston; and I only wish the northern army had not by such deeds marred an otherwise glorious record."

When the two riders returned to Marshall Hall, it was a little past noon and they were entirely ready to hear announcement of the midday meal which, in accordance with universal custom in the South, was called dinner. When it was announced and the gentlemen had seated themselves at the table, they saw that Dinah had nobly fulfilled her promise to prepare a dinner "sho' 'nuff."

It was a feast of good things, a triumph of culinary skill, a marvel of variety and of service, such a dinner as Captain Alston was accustomed to see in the Marshall home, and

such as Mr. Standwick had often heard of but which he confessed he had never seen. The linen was the finest and whitest, the abundant and handsome silver was spotlessly burnished, and every incident and appurtenant of the dinner was in exquisite taste, and it being a typical southern dinner, every dish was on the table, except the dessert and coffee.

Hester, who surveyed the table with a pride which she did not attempt to conceal, replied to the compliments bestowed upon the dinner by her guests. "Yes, sah; Dinah sho'ly is outdone herse'f ter-day. Miss Ma'y would be proud ef she was heah. I hope you gwine eat somepin' ob ebberythin' on de table."

"I am sure we will do our best," Mr. Standwick, laughing heartily, replied; "but if we were to eat something of everything Dinah has provided you would have two sick guests on your hands."

Ned, who felt as if he had a share in the triumph of the dinner, said, "Now, Mr. Stan'ick an' Marse Cap'n, heah's tuckey an' chicken, an' roas' pig an' bake' ham, an' den de ve'y bes' ob all, a big fat 'possum. I cotch him night 'fo' las' on de aige ob de bottom up a little bitty sweet gum w'ut ben' wid him. You know how dey say,

" 'De mostes' smoke is whar de li'les' fire be,
En de ve'y bigges' 'possum clim' de ve'y li'les' tree;'

an' dat's er fac'. I roll him in de hot ashes

an' li'l' coals ter tek de ha'r off, an' he hang out in de fros' las' night, an' Dinah parbile him w'en she cook brekkus, an' bake him wid sweet taters 'roun' him fer dinner; an' dar he is, an' der ain't no meat ekalize ter him."

"Why, I never ate a piece of 'possum in my life," said Mr. Standwick.

"Laws a mussey! is dat so, boss? Den you sho' is miss a heap er good eatin'," replied Ned.

"I endorse Ned's encomium upon the 'possum," said Captain Alston, "but I am inclined to think love of the dish is in a large degree a cultivated taste."

"Jes' you try a piece 'fo' you quits, boss," said Ned, "an' you gwine ter say it's de fines' meat dat you ever wrap yerself 'roun'."

This new and forceful expression amused Mr. Standwick greatly, and in the course of the good dinner to which he sought to do full justice he did not fail to try the 'possum, which, though he found it exceedingly toothsome, he was inclined to agree with Captain Alston that he would have to cultivate a taste for it.

Soon after dinner, Captain Alston excused himself, after cordially inviting Mr. Standwick to visit him. Ned, who, as he expressed it, had "done finis' hidin' de res' er dat 'possum," escorted him home, and when he returned, Mr. Standwick was regaling himself with a cigar on the front gallery. When

Ned had put the horses in the stable, he came and seated himself near the top of the steps.

"Boss, ain't you fin' Cap'n Als'on a mighty nice man?"

"Yes, indeed; I enjoyed his company very much. He is very intelligent, and is an elegant gentleman."

"Ob co'se he's er gent'man. He Marster's fr'en' an he's quality-folks, de very top er de pot. He's a thurrerbred—no scrub in him, no, sah! He come f'um fightin' stock, an' endurin' er de wah he was de cap'n er de out-fightines' comp'ny dat ebber you seed. Dey fit twell mos' all on 'em was kilt. Marse Hamilton an' Marse Alfred all b'long ter it. Cap'n Als'on was bad shot an' his son too."

"Ned, he tried all the time to be cheerful, but I think he must have suffered some great sorrow."

"Yes, sah; he b'en thu' de fi'y furniss ob 'flickshun; an' I gwine ter tell you 'bout him soon I git de time. I 'lowed ter do it dis ebenin', but I got ter fly 'roun' heah an' 'ten ter some matters 'g'inst Marster git back, so I jes' fetch you de little mar' an' yer kin go ridin'. Time yer git back, Marster an' Miss Ma'y be heah."

Later, Mr. Standwick took a short ride through the field and watched the cotton-pickers, and listened to their conversation as they lazily picked or loitered at the ends of the rows. It was all new to him, and very amusing.

CHAPTER VIII

THE short autumn afternoon was fading into twilight when Colonel Marshall and his wife drove up. They warmly greeted Mr. Standwick, and expressed the hope that he had been so well entertained as not to have been lonesome. He assured them that his experience as the guest of Ned and Hester had not only been novel, but most delightful, and that a night and forenoon spent with a gentleman like Captain Alston was a pleasure never to be forgotten.

“Ned has been a fine host, and all you said of him I found to be true.”

Ned removed his hat and bowed.

“Thankee, boss; I’se glad you sat’sfied. I al’ays tries ter do de right t’ing w’en Marster be gone. I knows he ’specta me ter be er gent’men, ’ca’se I ain’t nebber ’soshate wid no udder kin’ er folks. Boss, you ain’t seed Ned yit lak I wan’ you ter see him. Yer jes’ wait twell Sunday an’ I gwine drive Miss Ma’y to de ’Piskerpul chu’ch in de kerridge. You jes’ wanter see me in de bro’dclof suit w’ut Marster give me, an’ mah stobe-pipe hat, an’ my blue-silk neck han’kercher, wid my ker-ridge whip in mah han’. Den you gwine see Ned, Marster’s gent’men nigger sho’ ’nuff.

I b'en dress dat way ev'y Sunday sence I b'en er man. I b'en drivin' Miss Ma'y mo' 'n forty year, an' I al'ays w'ars mah bro'dclof suit an' mah stove-pipe hat, an' my blue-silk neck han'kercher, an' I wouldn' swap places wid de man w'ut drive de king's charyet. I'd ruther drive Miss Ma'y dan drive der Queen er Inglun."

Mr. Standwick and his host and hostess laughed heartily at Ned's picture of himself as he would appear in the rôle of charioteer on Sunday, and then entered the house.

"Mr. Standwick," said Colonel Marshall, "we will go into the parlor; you have never been in there, I believe. We prefer the more homelike environments of the sitting-room. To sit with a guest in the parlor looks like making company of him, and we want you to be as one of the family."

The parlor was a handsome room, furnished luxuriously, and the walls were adorned with several pictures that were genuine works of art; but after admiring the beauties of the room, by common impulse they all moved toward the brightly lighted and cosy sitting-room.

"Mr. Standwick," said Colonel Marshall, "you might not unreasonably suppose that Ned talked to curry favor with the 'powers that be' in this little realm, but if you think so, you are doing him an injustice. He means every word he says. His devotion to his Mis-

tress is not pretended. He would die for her if it were necessary. He is possessed of one virtue, among many others, that is unfortunately rare among people of all races, and especially among negroes—gratitude.

“Unfortunately, as you know, negroes were sometimes sold for debt, and an improvident relative of Mrs. Marshall's owned Hester when she was a girl, and as she was in danger of being sold,—an event most rare in every branch of Mrs. Marshall's family, and mine, I am proud to say,—Mrs. Marshall bought her to prevent her and Ned from being separated; and they have both proved their gratitude through many a long year. Negroes though they are, Ned is a gentleman and Hester is a lady, in conduct and character, and both have not only our respect, but our affection.”

“I am entirely prepared to believe all you say, Colonel Marshall. I have never seen greater affection manifested than that which Ned certainly feels for your wife and yourself. If, before I came South, any one had told me such relations ever existed between master and slave, as I am sure existed between your family and those two negroes when they were slaves, and which exist yet, I would have scoffed at the statement as absurd and impossible, for it would have been to me incomprehensible then.”

“It may surprise you, Mr. Standwick, when

I say that it is by no means exceptional. There are tens of thousands of such instances in the South, and, indeed, among families of social position, such relations of affection and trust between masters and slaves holding the place in the household that Ned and Hester do, were the rule rather than the exception; yet the people where you live were made to believe that we beat and butchered slaves to make a southern holiday.

“ You will understand that I do not mean to paint slavery in roseate hues, nor to make any beautiful picture of the conditions which accompanied it, for I did not myself believe in slavery. There was much to be deplored and room for improvement, and under no condition would I have my two hundred negroes restored to slavery; but there is no doubt whatever, that nine negroes out of ten were more comfortable and better cared for in every way than they are now. Whether the crop failed or flourished, whether prices of products were high or low, it made no difference to the negro. He had no care for the morrow, but his master had to feed and clothe and shelter him, and over the whole South he did not pay one per cent. dividend on his market value.”

“ I must confess, Colonel,” said Mr. Standwick, “ that my views as to conditions here, and the relation between master and slave, have undergone a great change. They were

largely erroneous, even if conditions were only half so good and so pleasant elsewhere as they are between you and your slaves and former slaves."

Supper was announced, and the guest had another opportunity to observe the seemingly exhaustless capacity of the Marshall larder, and to admire Dinah's culinary skill and Hester's taste, and again he expressed his probation and appreciation.

"We are," said Mrs. Marshall, "appreciative of your kind expressions, and your enjoyment of what our table affords gives us pleasure. The matter of how people live is largely a matter of custom and heredity, so to speak. The kind of food eaten and the ways of cooking it, are as various as the latitudes. Your people in the North, as I know, use cold bread, and so you have found it at your plate at every meal. We think no meal complete without hot bread in at least one form. I have been told that, while in New England they have excellent food, and that it is well prepared, yet in most instances the quantity is so carefully gauged, that when the meal is over and every member of the family and every guest is fed abundantly, there is practically nothing left."

"Yes, Madam, that statement is in a large measure true. I do not believe that the art of preparation of food is better understood anywhere, but the people are not inclined to

waste. The climate is not so genial as it is here; the season for growing crops is much shorter; the area of arable land is much less, and as we have had no slaves, it has required, and still requires, skillful farming and good management, and work by all the family, combined with the closest economy, to insure prosperity and the laying up of wealth; so we do not waste in any line, yet we have every comfort."

"With us it is exactly the contrary, Mr. Standwick. I have since my childhood, as has Mr. Marshall, been accustomed to living, so far as concerns the table, just as we live now. My father and his father lived the same way, as did their fathers.

"There is, of course, no special style, no splendor about it, no attempt to set a banquet, but we know that you must see that it is too abundant—even prodigal; more is left than is eaten; but we are accustomed to it, and except under the stress of sheer necessity we could not live otherwise, and fortunately we have never felt such stress.

"As we lived before the war and live now, nine-tenths of the best people of the South lived, and when social peace and industrial and commercial prosperity come again they will return to the same way of living. It is an element and incident of hospitality, and we hold that hospitality is a cardinal virtue."

When they had returned to the sitting-

room, Mr. Standwick said, "Ned has told me some most amazing stories about juries to-day, and I rather suspected that he was drawing a long bow and was disposed to have some fun at my expense, though he seemed to be in earnest."

"I assure you, Mr. Standwick, he was not jesting. Every incident he related, you may rest assured, was literally true, and they are but specimens of many such which occurred during the horrible process of Reconstruction —so-called. Why, sir, in one of the Southern States, in many parts of which the negro population largely outnumbers the whites, there was a negro justice. The lawyers engaged in the case argued it all day before him, there being no jury. The lawyers repeated the familiar rule of law that the justice must decide 'according to the weight of the evidence,' so when the argument was ended the sable jurist rose, and solemnly stroking his chin, said, 'Ebber' one of yer niggers step quick ober heer to de platform scales.'

"One of the counsel said, 'Why, Judge, what are you going to do?'

"'I'm gwine ter weigh dese niggers w'ut been er testerfyin'—so I kin tell w'ich side got de mos' weight ob de ev'dence.'

"That, too, is a literally true incident, and we were for a number of years, and are yet to a great extent, subject to such conditions. Yet the people of the North were told how

beneficent and beautiful was the working process of what was misnamed 'Reconstruction' —the most fearful orgy of destruction and corruption, rottenness and robbery that ever stained the records of human history.

"We told the whole world just what I have told you, but were not believed because we were or had been so-called 'rebels.' I say 'so-called,' because, of course, we were not so in fact. The Southern States exercised the unquestionable right to withdraw from the Union, and sovereign States could, of course, not rebel, and the citizens of these States, of course, were not 'rebels.' Our northern friends seemed to find pleasure in applying to us the designation of 'rebels,' and we, in like spirit, called them 'Yankees,' so I suppose honors may be said to be easy.

"Do you know, Mr. Standwick, that after the brave, decent men of the northern army, who fought from conviction, had returned to their homes victors, that so-called Republicans, but, in fact, scalawags and carpetbaggers, and aliens from every land, and the rakings of the alleys and gutters and purlieus of the northern cities, fastened on the ten Southern States in five years a debt of \$293,000,000, and that the printing bill of one State for one year was more than the entire expense of the administration of the government of that State before the war?"

"Permit me to ask, Colonel Marshall,

what was the meaning of the terms 'carpetbagger' and 'scalawag'?"

"The designation 'carpetbagger' is easily understood, Mr. Standwick. It means individuals who came from the North to take advantage of conditions which speedily arose after Reconstruction legislation went into effect. Most of such adventurers were without character, conscience, or property. Their entire worldly possessions were easily transported in a carpet-bag, yet when many of them left, they had grown rich by reason of their pillaging and plundering a disfranchised and helpless people.

"'Scalawag' is almost an entirely arbitrary term of reproach. I believe it was at one time applied to the undersized cattle of Shetland, but down here, in the Reconstruction period, it meant a native southern Republican, as distinguished from a carpet-bag Republican. Native southern white men who joined the Republican party were generally so designated.

"Republican rule and administration here were so corrupt and demoralizing, that we who gathered under the Democratic banner and stood for exclusive white supremacy during the heat and passion of the struggle, held every white man who was against us as our foe and grouped them all under the general term 'scalawag'; but, in truth, the designation was as to many of them unjust, and I am

desirous not to do any man injustice. There were very few, if any, of the carpetbaggers who were entitled to respect or confidence. No viler crew of conscienceless adventurers ever invaded a conquered and oppressed land; but there were many southern men who had been faithful to the fortunes of the Confederacy and who had been good soldiers, who joined the Republican party. One distinguished gentleman, and one among the best fighters in the whole Confederate army, is a Republican. The men of this class argued that the Republican party was in power and that we were helpless to resist the legislation directed against the South, termed the Reconstruction statutes, and that they could be able in a large degree to control the ignorant negroes and corrupt carpetbaggers, and mitigate the evils and horrors of Reconstruction. I was not able, myself, to agree with them, or reconcile their conduct to my standards; but I knew many of them to be honest men, and they kept their hands clean, and I am inclined to think now that they, perhaps, have rendered useful services to their people—that is to say, at least, some of them have."

" You asked me, Colonel Marshall, a few minutes ago, if I knew of the conditions that you portrayed, and I desire to say that I certainly did not. I heard of misgovernment here, but was told that it was the complaint of rebels, and gave little attention to it."

"I prefer, Mr. Standwick," returned his host, "to believe that the northern people did not know what we underwent. It would shake my faith in my kind to believe that American citizens living in any section understood our situation, and yet upheld at the ballot-box those responsible for it, and who sought to perpetuate such iniquity. However, though the night has been long, the day is beginning to dawn. Slowly and surely the people of the North are coming to learn that they cannot recast or repeal the laws of nature; that they cannot turn back the tide of human progress; that the Ethiopian can no more change his skin or the leopard his spots now than they could two thousand years ago. The truth has dawned upon them that intelligence and virtue and patriotism will ultimately triumph over ignorance and corruption and barbarism, and that no power in all the earth can keep the white man in subordination to the negro. Intellectually, physically and morally, the white man bears the divine stamp of superiority to men of every race! He is the Heaven-endowed leader of the forces of civilization and progress and Christianity; and judged by ethnological and all other tests and standards, the negro is his inferior and can never rise to his level. There is no bridge that can span the gulf which God has placed between them. The day is coming, though you and I will not live to see it, when the

people of the North will cry out for the repeal of every constitutional provision and every statute that gives the negro political equality. Social equality is, of course, impossible. No law can control that, even between people of the same race; and even the suggestion of its possibility between the white man and the negro is so absurd as to provoke impatience and indignation. The irrepressible, unconquerable racial instinct is a barrier that no social ambition can scale. The white man who attempts to enforce or illustrate social equality will only lower himself without uplifting the negro.

"I have said much more than I had intended to say, Mr. Standwick, but I trust you will not think that any statement I have made is in the slightest degree inspired by prejudice or ill-feeling, either against the people of the North or the negro.

"While, of course, the invasion of the South was unnecessary, unjustifiable and cruel, yet the issues involved in the war, and the only ones the war did settle—slavery and secession—have been settled in that tribunal from the judgments of which there is no appeal, and it is folly to discuss barren abstractions, or to mourn over that which cannot be changed or recalled.

"I gave up two sons to defend a just and righteous cause, and my heart goes out to every northern father who suffered such a

loss as I suffered, or made such a sacrifice as I made. I gave also a lovely daughter. I say gave her, for she was as directly a victim of the war as if she had fallen in battle. I trust I can forgive, though I can never forget the indignities put upon my family and myself, by the soldiers of the United States, and negro soldiers at that.

"I have never turned a white Federal soldier—none others applied—from my door, whom we could help. I have had during the war sometimes four wounded men in this house at once, and my wife and servants dressed their wounds and watched by their beds. I received them of my own free will. They were not forced upon me, and I did everything in my power for them, forgetting all but that they were fellow-men in distress; somebody's boys whom I watched and tended and gave back to their mothers, alive and well, and not as my boys came to me, straightened for the tomb. I tried to display the same spirit which my great countryman, General Lee, showed when a poor fellow knocked at his door for help, shortly after the war closed. He relieved his necessities, and when his wife asked if it was 'one of our old boys,' the General replied, 'No, he fought on the other side; but we must not think of that now.'

"As to the negro, I was born on a plantation. My father and his father were slave

owners, just as I was. In lieu of my mother's milk, I drew nourishment from the breast of a slave. The crooning of lullaby songs by my 'black mammy' soothed me to sleep many a night—just as Ned and Hester sang my sons and my daughter to sleep.

"I have never made a negro who had been my slave leave this place. I have kept them when they were lazy and worthless. I have fed them and housed them and taken care of them when they were well, and buried them decently when death took them. They were most faithful during the war, and I have tried to show my appreciation of their fidelity. They are very improvident and shiftless, but neither my wife nor I ever turned any of them away that were in need. I know their virtues and their faults, and their limitations in intelligence and morals, as you of the North can never possibly know, and I feel toward them as do nine-tenths of the people of the South who owned slaves.

"You know, or perhaps you do not, that between negroes when they were slaves, and since they have been free, and those of the South who owned no slaves, there is and always has been a traditional and unconquerable antagonism. Any honest negro will tell you that his best friends are those who owned slaves, and that negroes never hesitate to appeal to their former masters, or any former slave owner whom they know, for help.

"In the trial of criminal cases, where negroes are defendants, every lawyer capable of trying a criminal case will, so far as possible, try to get on the jury all the men who once owned slaves, or the descendants of such men, and to keep off the jury those of the class which did not own slaves.

"While this is all true, yet I know, and the people of the South know, that the negro is not fit to exercise the privilege of suffrage and will not be for generations to come, if ever he is. We know, too, that conferring upon him the right to vote was worse than a mistake; it was the monumental crime of the age. It wrought irreparable injury to the negro and to the nation. It was the very fury and frenzy of political bitterness and prejudice, and the people of the North will some day come to know it."

"Colonel Marshall," said Mr. Standwick, "it is a great pity that what you say, and what I have seen and heard and believe to be true, could not have been made plain to the people of New England as soon as the war ended."

"It was impossible, Mr. Standwick. The tide of human passion ran too high then. The roar of the storm of sectional hate which swept over the Republic drowned out all we said and we fell upon evil days.

"Do you know, my friend, what was the direst calamity that ever befell the South? It was the death of Abraham Lincoln. He was

a broad-minded, tender-hearted, patriotic man; and while I can never agree with his construction of the Constitution, or with his views as to the right of the National Government to coerce a sovereign State, nevertheless, had he lived, such would have been the force of his great character, and the extent of his influence over his party, that we would have been spared the horrible ordeal of Reconstruction.

"When pygmies tried to perform the task of giants, and partisans took patriot's places, the South was made the victim of the most infamous and oppressive system of government, or rather of misgovernment, that ever defiled the annals of a nation. Had he not been taken off, every State would have been speedily restored to its normal and constitutional relations to the Union, and the restoration of kindly feeling between the people of the two sections would have been much sooner accomplished."

"Your statement, Mr. Marshall, concerning Mr. Lincoln, is very surprising to me. I have always believed he was the object of especial hatred to the people of the South."

"There is no doubt, Mr. Standwick, that the southern people were greatly prejudiced against him when he was elected President, but as we look back upon his actions as President and compare him with those whose counsels prevailed after he passed away, we realize

how much greater and more patriotic he was than any of his contemporaries in his own party.

"We feel sure that if instead of being killed, he had only been wounded, and it had been proposed to arrest Jefferson Davis or to charge him with connection with the deed of the misguided Booth, Mr. Lincoln would have protested against the arrest. He was too just a man, and knew too well the character of Mr. Davis, to have even suspected him of being in sympathy with that deed, which he could have no more encouraged or aided the commission of, than he could have strangled a sleeping babe.

"The passions born of sectional strife have not entirely subsided, but we can contemplate the character of Mr. Lincoln in a somewhat clearer light, and weigh his deeds in juster scales, and no man that does can deny that his name is entitled to a high place on the roll of great Americans.

"Dissenting as I must and ever shall from the views of Mr. Lincoln, yet I recognize that he was one of the great men of history, and thousands of my fellow-countrymen of the South agree with me in this regard. He was tender-hearted, sympathetic, and sincere; and he was a great man, if measured by the severest tests and standards."

"However much we may differ, Colonel, upon other questions," said Mr. Standwick,

"I am sure that as to Mr. Lincoln we are in entire accord, and am equally sure we will be concerning another matter of which I desire to speak.

"During my ride through the country, I noticed where evidently many houses had been burned—many tall chimneys are standing even yet. Yesterday I rode in a northerly direction, and I saw evidence of many other houses having been burned, and near the ruins I saw are small, rough, uncomfortable houses, evidently meant to be temporary.

"I was told that every pile of ruins with standing chimney marks where there stood a splendid mansion, or at least a commodious residence, the abode of comfort if not of great wealth, and that every one of these buildings was burned by the Federal army. It is, I suppose, true, but it is as difficult as it is humiliating for me to believe that American soldiers could be guilty of such needless destruction of private property. I blushed as I looked upon such scenes of destruction and desolation. I had heard that such was the case, but it was so incredible I laughed at the statement."

"What you have heard, Mr. Standwick, is lamentably true. Not only were houses burned after being robbed, but non-combatants of every age and condition were left shelterless, penniless, without food and often only half clad. We had never conceived of

the possibility of such a warfare of destruction, and of outrage upon the innocent and helpless. My daughter was visiting only a few miles away, and the house she was in was burned at night, and she was left hardly more than half dressed, in a driving rain-storm and utterly without shelter; and only the fact that by the merest chance Captain Charles Stanwick, who was a Federal captain, passed the place while on duty and placed her on his saddle-horse and wrapped her in his overcoat and brought her home, saved her life. From that night's horror and exposure she never recovered, and she died from the effects of it, combined with grief for one she loved who fell in battle.

"Do you wonder that we have no respect for the commander of the army which committed such excesses? I have none and profess none.

"How different was the conduct of the Confederate commander in Pennsylvania. General Lee gave imperative orders that private property should not be molested—and his orders were obeyed.

"General John B. Gordon told the people along the route of his army that if any member of his command laid his hand upon the property of any citizen, or molested any man's house or family, and they would point out the offender, they should have his life.

"How nobly did the conduct of General

Grant contrast with that of him who led the army that wrought such ruin here. General Grant did not destroy homes, or wage warfare on non-combatants.

"Relentlessly, with bull-dog pertinacity and consummate skill, he pursued the one object of crushing the worn and weary and half-starved army of his great antagonist and thereby ending the war; but he did not lay waste and desolate the land and leave women and children to starve and freeze. He was too chivalrous, too kind of heart, and too great a soldier to mar a glorious record by deeds of barbarous atrocity. He was matched against him who was not only the ablest military commander of ancient or modern times, but who, in grandeur of character and glory of achievement, in moral and intellectual equipoise, and in purity and sublimity of character, approached nearer to Divinity than any man that ever lived.

"It is a pleasure to contemplate two such men, for they were two great Americans, whose characters and deeds reflect unfading glory upon this nation.

"How chivalrously did General Grant treat General Lee in the hour of surrender! What delicacy and consideration for his noble foeman! He displayed no feeling of triumph, he did not gloat over his vanquished antagonist. He did not seek to humiliate him, but treated him with the chivalric court-

esy so justly due to the knightliest and noblest of men.

"The lofty and generous conduct of their great commander seems to have made its influence felt upon his men, and when they opened their haversacks and offered all their rations to the hungry Confederates there was presented a scene worthy to have been perpetuated on immortal canvas.

"Mr. Standwick, whatever may be our opinions relative to the war, its causes, character or results, and however widely different may be our views, we, in common with other men who are capable of appreciating the noble and heroic in human character, will agree that when Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee met upon that battlefield, those who beheld that meeting looked upon two of the sons of men who belong in the Pantheon of the Immortals.

"I am sure you will bear with me a few minutes longer while I recall another incident in the life of General Grant, which enshrined him in the respect and esteem of the people of the South. While he was still in command of the army, some of those in authority at Washington threatened to arrest General Lee, in violation of the terms of his parole. General Grant was informed of the purpose at his headquarters in New York. At once he hastened to Washington. Striding into the presence of the conspirators against the free-

dom of General Lee, he said, 'I gave General Lee his parole, and he has observed it like the honorable soldier and gentleman that he is, and if you lay your hands upon him to arrest him, I will break my sword and throw it with my commission at your feet.' Are you surprised that side by side with the picture of General Lee and Jefferson Davis in this room you find the picture of General Grant?"

"I am not, since I know the opinion you hold concerning General Grant, with which I fully agree; but I had been led to believe that no southern man, entertaining views which you do as to the war and the rights of the South, holds in such high esteem the man who was victorious over your most beloved commander."

"You will find, my dear friend, that the people of the South are broader-minded and fairer-minded than you think them to be, and I believe I can prove to you—of course, meaning neither offense nor criticism—that they are much more so than are the people of the North.

"If Mr. Lincoln were alive and were to visit the South to-day, he would be received cordially, entertained hospitably, and treated with all the consideration due him, in view of his great distinction and his exalted character. He would be as safe from courtesy or insult as he would be in Illinois, and he would be at liberty to speak his honest convictions

with perfect freedom. That this is true, there is not a shadow of a doubt.

"Now, suppose Jefferson Davis should visit New England—do you believe he would be entertained by your best people, or be allowed to speak his honest convictions without interruption, or even be treated courteously? It is, judging by the tone and temper of the northern press, practically certain that he would not.

"I feel sure you would not yourself vouch for his safety, at least you would not guarantee him courteous treatment. You cannot find now in a southern paper a single word of unkindness toward Mr. Lincoln, while the northern press has exhausted the vocabulary of abuse in denunciation of Mr. Davis. Yet, Mr. Standwick, Jefferson Davis is in every respect as worthy of the admiration and confidence of his fellow-men as was Mr. Lincoln.

"Both obeyed their convictions, and Mr. Davis endured the horrors of a dungeon and faced indictment and threatened trial, and is yet denied the rights of citizenship, and is set apart from his fellow-men in the isolation of political martyrdom, and 'arch-traitor' is a favorite phrase applied to him by the northern press and northern politicians.

"That he was not a traitor any intelligent man knows. His conviction of the crime of treason was absolutely impossible, and this great government, with all its power, though

it had procured him to be indicted in a court presided over by the Chief Justice of the most august judicial tribunal on earth, dared not try him.

"Mr. Davis was not one whit more guilty than was I, or millions of others of his countrymen, and for my sentiments and actions as regards the 'war of the rebellion,' as our northern neighbors are pleased to term it, my conscience is void of offense toward God or man.

"I have seen Mr. Davis painted in the northern press as a conspirator and murderer and ruffian, an arrogant, domineering, resentful, bitter foe of the Union and the northern people, while the truth is—and I know him well—he is a courteous, Christian gentleman, the greatest master of the English tongue on this continent, a statesman, an orator, a soldier, and a man of unswerving fidelity to his convictions.

"He has never since the war given utterance to a word of abuse or unkindness toward the northern people, but has always urged upon the people of the South obedience to law, respect for the powers that be, and honest effort to restore good feeling between brethren long estranged.

"You know, of course, Mr. Standwick, how brilliant and gallant was his conduct during the Mexican war, when he shed his blood under the stars and stripes; and that he was

Secretary of War in the only Cabinet that has ever remained unchanged for four years since the foundation of this government, and with what conscientious fidelity and consummate ability he discharged the duties of that high trust? Yet his successors in that great office, with unpatriotic and malignant purpose, contrived means whereby to hoist a workman high in the air, in order that he might cut out of the granite where it had been graven in honor of Jefferson Davis, his name—which appeared on a great public structure erected during his term of office.

“I put down much of this to the bitterness and passion born of war, but there is no excuse or justification for abuse and misrepresentation of a man who is one of the most illustrious of Americans. I should be ashamed to speak or even think of Mr. Lincoln or General Grant in such terms as millions of your northern neighbors speak of Jefferson Davis—yet neither of these great men was, or is, one whit worthier than is he.”

“I must confess, Colonel, that northern people do not entertain a very kindly feeling for Mr. Davis. Indeed, they seem disposed to hold him responsible for secession, and the war in great measure; yet, I can readily see that he was not logically, or in fact, more so than were thousands of others.”

“When you know us better, Mr. Stand-

wick, you will be better able to appreciate our actions and our motives, and will find that we have been cruelly maligned."

"I have, sir, found that out already. I am abundantly assured of the error of many views which I have long held, and northern man and Union man that I am, and strong in the conviction that secession was not constitutional or justifiable,—as I expect ever to be,—I have no language to express my abhorrence of him or those who are responsible for the fearful destruction and devastation I have seen here."

"The northern people," said Colonel Marshall, "I trust and believe will learn the truth yet, and do us justice, and I pray God that they may—because peace will come only when men on both sides of the line accord each to the other integrity of purpose, and fidelity to honest conviction."

"It is late," said Mr. Standwick, "but there is one incident, an occurrence of which Ned has given me some intimation, which has greatly interested me, and that is the tragedy with which Captain Alston was connected and the cause of it; and if you have no objection I would be pleased to hear more of it. It presents a phase and reflection of public sentiment here—which is as interesting to me as it is surprising."

"I have no objection to telling you of every

incident connected with the matter preceding the actual tragedy. What occurred after that, it would be more becoming in me to let others tell you of, and Ned will do that in his own way, I have no doubt. So it is unnecessary for me to go beyond, or even as far as the tragedy itself.

CHAPTER IX

“I AM sure, Mr. Standwick, you have formed a favorable opinion of Captain Alston. No man with even the most casual acquaintance could fail to do so.”

“I certainly have,” said Mr. Standwick. “Unless I know absolutely nothing of human character, he is a man in every respect admirable—honest, kind, courteous, brave, and gentle. I feel greatly drawn toward him, the more especially because I feel sure he has suffered some sorrow which has wrung his heart.”

“Your conclusions are correct. Captain Alston is a gentleman by breeding, instinct and education. I am his senior by more than twenty years, and have known him since he was born. He never harbored a dishonorable or even questionable thought or purpose.

“In the army, as a cavalry commander, he displayed not only courage of the highest type,—that was a matter of course,—but marked aptitude for command and the execution of daring and dangerous achievements, and he rode and fought like the very genius of battle incarnate. His men were devotedly attached to him, and he to them, so closely

that he time and again refused promotion and served with his original company to the end.

" He was and is as gentle and tender as he is brave and honorable, and like all of his breed and blood, he is the soul of courage and of honor.

" His wife died when Jean was born, and upon his motherless daughter he lavished all the affections of his noble and tender nature, and she grew into lovely girlhood and young womanhood almost as one of my children, and her love of her father was well nigh idolatrous.

" When he returned from the war of course his financial condition was greatly changed for the worse; but Jean adapted herself to the situation with uncomplaining cheerfulness, and the two were more like brother and sister than father and daughter.

" I had no idea of the cause of Jean's decline. I saw her fading and failing day by day, and was almost as deeply distressed as if she had been my own daughter; but there never came to my ears hint or intimation of the cause—and indeed my wife did not know or hear of the vile rumors and slanderous reports until a few days before death released the innocent young sufferer.

" Had the slanderer's name been revealed to me, I think I would have killed him as I would have killed a mad dog. When I heard of them, when it was made clear to me that

a sweet and lovely young woman had been slain by the shafts of slander, I was filled with rage, and my first impulse was to see her father and let him know the truth. It may have been that had I reflected I would have acted differently; but I am by no means sure that I would, and I do not mean to be understood as expressing or even intimating regret for my action. It seemed to me then, and the passing years have not changed my views, that it was my duty to Alston as his friend to let him know the truth.

"I drove to his house, with Ned, of course. It was only a few days after the funeral of Jean. Alston was sitting in a large arm-chair before the fire in the reception-hall, the walls of which were covered with family portraits on both sides, beginning with his remote ancestors and reaching down to his wife, and down to a portrait of Jean just as she was entering her teens.

"He was the picture of loneliness and desolate grief, but he rose and greeted me with an effort at cheerfulness and cordiality. His face was pale, and those piercing black eyes looked at me through the mists of tears, and there was a pathetic tremor in his voice. When we were seated I said:

"'Alston, I am your friend, as you know—a friend upon whom you can always call and always rely.'

"He looked up with an expression of sur-

prise, and he seemed to feel that it was preliminary to some other statement in which he would be deeply interested, but he replied in his sincere and gentle tones:

“‘I know it, Marshall. I am proud of your friendship.’

“‘Alston, do you know what killed Jean, whom I loved as I did my own daughter?’ I said.

“‘No, Colonel, I do not,’ he replied. ‘The doctors were unable to tell me.’

“‘No,’ I said, ‘they did not, because they did not know. The cause of her death was beyond the reach of learning and scientific skill. Your daughter was killed by poison.’

“‘What! Poison? It must have been a most mysterious, slow, and subtle poison to defy the skill I bought to save her.’

“‘I do not mean she was poisoned in her body, but in her heart and soul—poisoned, too, by the tongue of a damned slanderer.’

“Alston, in an instant, from a half-reclining position in the deep chair, sat upright, and fixing his eyes upon me said, ‘What do you mean, Marshall?’

“‘I mean that a foul and lying tongue coupled her name with impurity and killed her as certainly as if the slanderer had driven a dagger through her heart.’

“‘Oh, no, Marshall; oh, no. You are mistaken,’ and he smiled a pathetic, incredulous smile, and shook his head as if to say,

'What you say cannot possibly be true.' 'I have read that there are those so base that they delight to revile and slander the pure in heart, but there is not upon the earth—no, Marshall, there cannot be found in the realms of the damned, one fiend who could conceive a purpose so vile as to say that which could even for an instant have cast a shadow upon the surface of her stainless soul. Her life was too pure, too gentle, too free from earthly dross or taint to give even blackest malice ground to say evil of her.'

"'I know that, Alston, yet she did not escape calumny. Would to God she had. A man whose offer of marriage she refused has filled this county with the poison of vile slander, and her life was destroyed by its falseness and foulness.'

"'Oh, no, Marshall; none but gentlemen have sought her hand in marriage, I am sure, and what you say must, of course, be impossible.'

"'Perhaps she did not tell you, but there was one *not* a gentleman who dared ask her to marry him.'

"'Who was it?'

"'Jack Harper.'

"Alston sprang to his feet and grasped the back of a chair standing near. He looked at me till it seemed as if those piercing eyes would look me through. Blended expressions of astonishment, incredulity, and rage passed

over his face. He breathed deep and hard. His face was as white as the handkerchief he held to his lips, and after what seemed to me an hour, but was doubtless but a moment, he said, 'Jack Harper ask my daughter to marry him? The son of an overseer, a plebeian cur, ask in marriage the hand of the daughter of an Alston? I knew she and he had been, as little tots, schoolmates in the country school, and that out of the very sweetness and kindness and gentleness of her nature she did not wound his feelings by repelling him when he presumed to cross the threshold of my house, but I did not know that he had dared offer her such an insult and indignity, and it is well I did not. But there must be some mistake!'

"'No, Alston, there is no mistake. Jean refused Jack Harper's offer, and then and there he threatened her with revenge, and he took revenge in its foulest, basest, most cowardly, most damnable form. There is no doubt of it. It is in the very air. My wife told me of it, hundreds can repeat and by their testimony prove it. You and I alone did not know, had not heard it. He has coupled her name in dishonor with his own and has used it in ribald jest.'

"'Marshall, for God's sake say you do not mean that—it cannot be! God would not permit a wretch so vile to poison the air!'

"'Alston, my friend,' I said, 'I cannot

lie to you—what I have said is true. I would give my right arm to have it otherwise.'

"Alston's eyes flashed, his form became almost rigid. His face grew paler, if that were possible, and releasing his hold upon the chair he staggered to the mantel and rested against it. I never saw such anguish depicted on a human face. After a few minutes, in which his breath came quick and hard, he said:

"Marshall, on these walls are the portraits of my ancestors for generations—ladies and gentleman all. No taint or stain ever rested upon the name of one of them. There you see the angel face of my wife, who gave me Jean at the price of her own life. I have never seen that woman who could take her place in my heart and home, and in large measure my life has been a lonely one. I have dared danger, I have known sorrow. I have felt the sting of at least comparative poverty. I have bowed in anguish unutterable above the grave of my Jean, but dishonor has never crossed the threshold of my house.

"No man ever impugned the honor or good name of an Alston and lived to repeat the slander after an Alston knew it.' He paused and seized a photograph of Jean which sat before him and which had been recently taken, and holding it in his left hand, which partially rested on the mantel,

while he was unconsciously opening and closing the other rapidly as it hung by his side, he bent his eyes close upon the picture and spoke to it in soft, caressing tones. 'Oh, my darling, your face is so much like your sainted mother's—so pure, so sweet, so lovely! You were the dearest child that ever brightened a home or gladdened a father's heart. The angels around the throne of God are not purer in heart and purpose than were you, my sweet child, and yet the slanderer did not spare you. With the venomous shafts from his vile tongue he took your life, but you shall be avenged! I will wipe out your wrong in his accursed blood!'

"Then turning to me he said, 'Marshall, here and now I call upon you, and invoke the spirit of my ancestors to bear me witness while I swear by the honor of the Alston name, by the memory of my dead wife, by the love I bear my daughter, and by the duty I owe to womanhood to still the tongue of the slanderer of defenseless innocence and purity. I swear that Jack Harper shall not live to see the sun go down!'

"'Alston, do not be rash,' I said. 'Remember, conditions have changed here. The "old régime" has for a time passed away. The very foundations of the ancient social temple have been uprooted. Ignorant and corrupt judges disgrace the bench. The jury box is filled with ignorant negroes, and if you

keep your oath it is impossible that your act will be passed upon by a jury of your peers, and it may be that by sheer force of corrupt power, wielded by those who are utterly unable to comprehend or appreciate the spirit and meaning of the higher and "unwritten law," you will be sent to prison or to the gallows.'

"He raised his head quickly and with flashing eyes he said: 'There are not between the oceans enough of the vile crew that makes a mockery of justice and defiles the temple of the law to send me to a prison or to the gallows. Now, Marshall, go! I love you, my friend, but go and leave me to myself and my sorrow!'

"His tone was imperative, and pressing his hand in silence, I withdrew. Ned will tell you the rest."

Mr. Standwick listened intently to the recital of Colonel Marshall, and after several moments of silence said,

"Colonel, I have intended to ask you one question in connection with what you have just told me—but I will ask you at another time. It is already later than I thought, and I will retire."

"Very well," said Colonel Marshall. "I will at any time freely and frankly answer any question germane to the matter," and with this the two gentlemen separated for the night.

CHAPTER X

IN the morning Colonel and Mrs. Marshall returned to town, pursuant to a promise made to their son, and renewed upon the insistent demand of their young grandson. After they had gone and Ned had finished his chores, Mr. Standwick reminded him that he had promised to tell him the rest of the story as to the tragedy of which Captain Alston was, as Colonel Marshall had intimated, the central figure.

"Ve'y well, sah. I tol' you how t'other day he b'en thu' de fi'y fu'nace uv 'flickshun, an' I gwine tell you 'bout him an' all w'ut happen."

"Colonel Marshall has told me about the visit he made to Captain Alston when you drove him, and when he told Captain Alston of the slanders upon his daughter's character, and he told me about the death of Mrs. Alston and how Miss Jean was raised almost in his family."

"All right, den, boss, I gwine tell you de res'. Hester an' me sot a sto' by her an' Miss Lucy, an' dey was jes' lak sisters. Dey go ter de neighborhood school an' ter de big school tergedder, an' erlong 'bout de middle

er de wah dey was mos' grown, an' Miss Lucy, wid her ha'r lak sugar candy, an' Miss Jean wid hern lak crow's fedders, jes' need wings ter be angels. 'Twan't no use, dough, fer nobody ter be settin' up ter Miss Lucy, 'ca'se she done gib her lub ter de fines' young man w'ut ebber was in dese parts, Cap'n Arthur Stan'ick, de 'Fedrit cap'n on our side.

" Miss Jean 'pear lak she don' keer much 'bout none er de young men, but one day a man fin' her heart dat she ain't speak ter, an' dat she didn't want ter fin' it, an' dat man was Cap'n Chawles Stan'ick; but sho' ez you bo'n she ain't never let on ter dat refec' twell he b'en kilt in de wah—den it was er s'prise ter mos' ev'ybody; but lub don' pay no 'ten-shun ter wah ner de color ob nuniforms, but it jes' strike whar it please.

" Howsomebber, I cain't tell you 'bout all dese matters at one time, so I tell yer now 'bout de trubbel w'ut riz over a man foolin' erlong er Cap'n Als'on.

" We'n de wah stop, ev'ybody was pow'ful po'; dey didn' had no money ner much er nothin' else; dat is, all 'ceptin' Marster—he ain't never b'en broke. He done al'ays had money lak his daddy befo' him. He hab dis big plan'ashun an' 'bout two hunderd niggers, an' he lib lak a gent'man dat he is; but he was a farmer fer true, an' he put erway money fer a rainy day. Cap'n Chawles sabe his house an' er lot er cotton, lak he sabe

Cap'n Als'on's house too. De Cap'n hab plenty ter eat an' er good farm, but he ain't had much money, an' ain't rich, lak he was befo' de wah, an' Miss Jean couldn't dress so mighty fine, but she was jes' as purty.

"Dat man Harper w'ut you stay wid t'other night, he made lots er money, 'ca'se he wu'k his niggers pow'ful hard, an' feed 'em scan'lous light, an' befo' de wah he was rich, an' lak I tell you t'other day, he got his start oberseein'.

"You notice he was kind er lame, an' he ain't go ter de wah; an' w'en de wah broke out his son Jack, his onlies' chile, was at school some'r's in de Norf, whar his daddy come f'um, an' he stay dar twell de war eend.

"You see, when de Yankee army come thu' heah de old man claim he b'en a pusse-cuted Newnyun man, an' he put a Newnyun flag ober his house an' sabe hit an' er big lot er cotton. W'en de boy come back he was grown, an' his daddy gib him er plan'ashun an' plenty er money, an' Jack tu'ns big politishuner an' got to be cap'n ob a nigger mer-lisher comp'ny, an' de niggers dey call him Cap'n Jack.

"Befo' he gotter mixin' wid de scalawags an' niggers he come ober here an' wanter mek a soshul call on Miss Lucy, 'ca'se he b'en to de neighborhood school wid her w'en dey was chilluns; but no, sah, no oberseer's son fer her, ef he got a bar'l er money; so

she treat him so col' he ain't come no mo'. Den he 'cide he go ter see Miss Jean an' try ter cut er shine erlong er her, but she soon let him know he barkin' up de wrong tree.

" He ain't nebber been b'long in her class, ob co'se, but 'ca'se dey b'en schoolmates she treat him perlite; an' he see she be po' 'count er de wah, an' he talk 'bout bein' rich, an' he up an' axes her ter mah'y him. Den he heerd f'um her. She come right ober here, an' I was in de settin'-room making a fiah, an' I heerd her tell Miss Lucy 'bout it, an' seed her show Miss Lucy how she done when he ax her. She got up an' tek hol' ob one side her skirt 'twix' her thum' an' fus' finger, an' pull it 'way roun' lak she tryin' ter miss sumpin' an' den she bow an' say, ' Mr. Harper, I'm not for sale. De daughter ob er Als'on nebber will marry er oberseer's son.' You orter see her toss dat purty haid er hern twell de black curls hang down mos' to her shoul'ers, an' she curl her purty red lips an' lif' her thurrerbred nost'ils in de a'r, an' sweep outen de room, showin' Miss Ma'y how she lef' Jack Harper—an' den she bus' out cryin'.

" 'Cordin' ter Miss Jean, dat man got sho' mad. He all de time strut an' swagger an' w'ar westcuts wid big stripes on 'em, an' Marster say he was a ' swashbuckler '—w'utebber dat is; an' I know he didn't no mo' b'long in de same class wid Marster an' Cap'n Als'on dan er plow-mule b'long in de same class er-

long er Marster's saddle-hoss. Jack Harper sayed he gwine mek her an' her 'ristercrat daddy sorry when she heah f'um him ergin. She so sweet an' kin', she don' wanter bring on no 'sturbance, so she ain't tell her daddy 'bout how dat feller talk to her, 'ca'se she know ef she do, Jack Harper gwine ter see trubbel.

"I tell you, boss, dese quality gent'men down in de Souf is de bes' men in de worl', but de man dat is dis'especkful to a lady er 'sults her, gwine ter heah f'um 'em sho' ez you bo'n.

"I 'spec' Marster done tol' you mos' er w'ut happen, but mebbe he ain't tell you w'ut he say w'en Miss Ma'y tol' him 'bout de slan'ers ob Jack Harper. Marster riz an' stretch hisself twell he look lak he 'bout eight foot high, an' spite er his bein' er big 'Pisker-pul member an' er Chrischun, he lak ter forgot, 'ca'se w'ut he say shock Miss Ma'y pow'ful. Den Marster, who think she de queen er de yearth, bow ter her an' say, 'I beg pardon, my dear; I spoke too quick an' too rough; please 'scuse me.' De king couldn't er b'en no perliter ner graceful-lak.

"W'en Cap'n Als'on riz an' staggered ter de fireplace, as I sho' Marster done tol' you, I swunk back an' got outen dar. 'Fo' Gawd, I jes' leabe meet er g'os' in de swamp at middle de night ez ter see sich er look on his face ergin.

"Atter while I sorter crope back, an' I heahed de Cap'n say, 'Jack Harper shan't live till de sun go down.' Den I say ter mahse'f, 'Good-by, Jack Harper; you'se er goner, sho' ez de sun set in de wes'."

"The Colonel told me all that he said," interrupted Mr. Standwick, "and what Captain Alston said up to the time the Colonel left."

"Ve'y well, boss, den I'll tell yer de res'. Marster went back home ter dinner, an' after dinner he hab me drive him ter town, 'ca'se he 'speck, lak I did, dat Cap'n Als'on gwine dar, an' we bofe know ef he do dey better look out; but Marster ain't say a word ter me 'bout what he 'speck, ner me ter him. When we got ter town, Marster went over ter de bank w'ut mos' b'long ter him, an' I went on up town whar I see a crowd er free niggers scramblin' an' grabbin' atter sumpin' on de groun', an' hollerin' an' raisin' er pow'ful racket.

"You see, de socket cote was in town, an' dar was a big crowd, mos'ly niggers; fer you know, boss, er nigger lub ter go ter cote mos' same ez he do ter er fun'al. De jedge was er carpetbagger an' de pussecutin' 'torney der same, an' Jack Harper an' a big lot er udder scalawags an' 'Publicans was in town. Jack was full er licker, an' was flingin' coppers an' nickels ter de niggers roun' him, an' dey was scrappin' ter beat de ban'.

"'Fo' I b'en dar long, I see Cap'n Als'on walk slow up de aige er de crowd, an' jes den a big nigger say, 'Cap'n Jack, t'ought you was gwine ter marry dat 'ristercrat darter w'ut lib yonder by de Marshall plan'ashun.'

"Jack Harper 'ply back, winkin' his eye an' twissin' his haid, 'Oh, I don' marry dat kin'; 'tain't no use ter marry her, you onnerstan'.'

"Den Cap'n Als'on say, 'You niggers stan' 'side.' De niggers b'en so busy scrappin' fer coppers an' nickels an' drinkin' licker dat dey ain't notice Cap'n Als'on; but w'en he speak dey got outen de way, an' dat quick.

"Den de Cap'n say, speakin' slow an' plain, 'Jack Harper, you slandered my dawter to her grave, an' you got ter answer ter me.'

"I t'ink Harper mus' er b'en drunk, fer sho'ly he wan' big 'nuff fool ef he was sober ter tetch his pistil w'en er Als'on be talkin' ter him, an' dat's what he done.

"Now, onnerstan', boss," and Ned leaned over and lowered his voice, "'twix' you an' me, de tetchin' er his pistil didn' mek de matter no diff'unt f'um w'ut it would er b'en, 'ca'se Harper done b'en 'lected ter git jus' w'ut he got. He done bre'k de gent'man's law in dis kentry, an' slan'er er lady, an' his time done come.

"Well, ez I was er sayin', he tetch his pistil, an' dat was de las' er him. Bang,

bang, bang! Cap'n Als'on's pistil went, quicker 'n er cat could wink her eye, an' ebber' bullet hit Jack Harper an' ary one on 'em would er kilt him. He dropped double up wid his pistil in his han' an' dem niggers scatter' lak pa'tridges."

"Stop," said Mr. Standwick, speaking earnestly and excitedly. "What do you say? Do you mean to tell me that Captain Alston killed the man?"

"Yes, sirree; dat's w'ut I sayed; fer he sho' did kill him deader 'n er mack'rel."

"You do not mean that Captain Alston, who spent the night with me, Colonel Marshall's friend, the soft-spoken, courteous gentleman, whose society I so much enjoyed?"

"Yes, sah, I means dat ve'y man."

"Great God, Ned; it's horrible! You say Harper was rich; then why didn't he sue him for damages?"

"Do w'ut, boss? Please 'scuse me, sah, but I don' onnerstan' w'ut you say."

"I said, why didn't he sue Harper for damages? I mean, why didn't he go to court and get a judgment and make Harper pay damages; and if he did not pay, levy on his plantation and sell it and collect the money."

"W'ut he gwine ter do wid de money arter he git it?"

"Why, take it to pay the judgment he got for damages."

"Does you mean, boss, dat Cap'n Als'on

gwine ter tek money fer ter pay him fer his dawter bein' slan'ered?"

"Yes, that's what I mean; there are many such cases. If he got damages, that would prove the slander and the innocence of his daughter."

Ned looked hard at his white friend and then took hold of his own chin and lower lip with his left hand, with his elbow resting against his side, while he ran the fingers of his right hand gently through his white and kinky locks, and as he held his head far to one side and half closed his left eye, in a tone of soliloquy, said,

"I gwine ter go back ter de fus' er de matter an' try ter figger it out. Now, le's see. A gent'man got a purty dawter dat he lub mo'n all de worl'. A low-down white man w'ut's rich come er co'tin' ob her an' ax her ter mah'y him, but she 'fuse him sco'nful-lak, 'ca'se he ain't b'long in her class. Den de white man slan'er her all ober de kentry an' p'isen her soul twell she die; den er gent'man ax me de queschun, 'Huccome her daddy ain't sue de white man w'ut slan'er his dawter, an' mek him pay money fer de slan'er, an' let de low-down white man go on libbin'?' No, dat's too much fer me. I cain't comprehen' it 'tall. I ain't nebber heerd er no sich case in de cote-house in dis kentry."

"Such things must happen here at times, and what do men do in such cases?"

"Dey does w'ut Cap'n Als'on done; dey kill de man w'ut slan'er er lady."

"Is that the law of this State?"

"Well, no, sah; I don' reckon it's 'zactly de law, 'ca'se I heerd Marster say dat it ain't de law writ in de law book; but all de same hit's de law w'ut gent'mens follers."

"Do you tell me that Captain Alston didn't try to get an apology, or get a confession and a settlement for money out of Harper before he shot him?"

"Dat's jes' w'ut I say, boss. No man cain't 'polergize fer dat kin' er devilment; an' ef Cap'n Als'on had er tuk money f'um Jack Harper, er had er sued him ter get money, he would er los' stan'in' 'mong de peepul; Marster wouldn't er spoke ter him. I tell you, boss, dese folks is proud, an' dey b'liebes lak I does in good blood, an' de onner ob er man's fambly; an' ef any man slan'er dey wife er dawter or mistreat or 'ceive any dey wimmin-folks, dey ain't gwine ter no cote-house atter money. Dey gwine atter blood, an' dey inginurly gits it; an' w'en dey gits thu' dere ain't no need fer a doctor, but dey needs a curiner ter hol' de inques'."

"Well, it's fearful."

"Well, boss, it all 'pens, you know. It's 'cordin' ter how folks is fotch up an' w'ut dey's usen to. You t'ink dat way, but ef you libbed heah, you'd tek notice dat it's mighty seldom dat er man lets his tongue loose 'g'inst

a lady's keracter, an' dat ginurly a man keeps offen his neighbor's home diggin's.

"No, sah, boss, quality-folks lak my Marster an' Cap'n Als'on nebber hunts no money w'en dey onner er de onner er dey fambly is tetch."

"I must say, Ned, that Colonel Marshall and Captain Alston seem to be two as fine men, as fine gentlemen as I have ever met."

"You'se right 'bout dat, boss. Dey don't only seem—dey is. Dar ain't no finer in de worl'. Dar ain't a drop er scrub blood in dey veins. Dey's thurrerbred f'um top ter toe, sho's yer bo'n."

"Well, when I interrupted you, you had just said that Harper fell dead and the negroes scattered. What happened then?"

"W'en Marster heerd de shootin' he come right ober dar, an' he went right up ter Cap'n Als'on an' put his arm aroun' him, an' de Cap'n glance down at Harper lyin' dar, an' he say, 'Colonel, my darling is 'venged,' an' den he lay his haid on Marster's shoul'er an' cry same ez er baby; an' right den an' dar Marster tell Cap'n Als'on he will 'fen' him in de cote."

"What, do you mean Colonel Marshall is a lawyer?"

"Yes, siree; de bigges' lawyer dey is. Dar ain't none er de res' er de lawyers in his class 'tall. He kin beat any man pleadin' you eber heerd in yer life. He ain't practise no law

in er long time. He don't hab to. He quit 'fo' de wah. An' sides all dat, he won't practise 'fo' dese carpetbag an' scalawag jedges an' nigger juries w'ut cain't read, nuther write."

"I see, Ned, you talk about the colored persons like I have often heard the southern people did; but of course you know as a fact that you never saw a colored man on the jury who could not read or write."

"Good Gawd, boss, you sho' is mistooken on dat p'int. Why, sah! dar's five hunderd niggers in dis county w'ut's b'en on de jury dat don't know 'b' f'um 'bullfoot.' Right yander in dat cote-house dar's niggers on de jury dat wouldn't know er vuddick f'um er mile-pos'. I heerd Marster say lots er times dat heap er dese carpetbag jedges nebber was lawyers nowhar; an' it's er fack dey wan't.

"Boss, ef you b'en lib heah lak we is, you'd er seed some er de s'prisenes' things dat ebber is happen. Lemme tell you somepin' dat was sho' funny, an' w'ut's mo', it's de truf. De Yankees bu'n de cote-house endurin' er de wah, an' dey was er hol'in' cote in er ole stoah an' had er ole war'house fer er jury-room. Well, one day, all twelbe er de jury was niggers an' nary one couldn't read er write. De carpetbag jedge say, 'Gent'men, go out an' fin' yo' vuddick,' an' de twelbe niggers march out wid de nigger sheriff, w'ich was struttin' lak a bahn-yard bantam. 'Twuz

pow'ful hot, an' dem niggers was gone 'bout er hour, an' w'en dey git back dey was sweatin' lak a plow-hoss, an' puffin' an' pantin' lak lizzuds an' dey han's was dirty an' dey clo'es full er dus', an' de jedge say, 'Gent'men, is you foun' er vuddick?' Den one nigger say, 'No, sah, Mr. Jedge, we ain't fin' no vuddick 'tall. I doan' b'liebe dar's any vuddick in dat house. We done s'arch ebber'whar. We tuk up de flo' an' look on de plates an' de sills an' de j'ists, an' didn' fin' nary sign er a vuddick.' Den ebber'body in de cote-house buss' out laffin'."

"Now, Ned, such a tale is hard to believe, but your Master vouches for your truthfulness."

"Oh, it's er solumn fack. I was dar w'en de twelbe niggers march in; an' ebb'ry one un 'em orter b'en in de cotton patch dat minnit. Dat was a purty come-off, er lot er co'n-fiel' niggers w'ut couldn't tell by er mile-pos' how fer 'twas ter town, settin' on er jury. But I am done got offen de track erg'in.

"Ez I was gwine on ter say, Cap'n Als'on say he much erbleeged ter Marster fer his offer ter 'fen' him; an' jes' 'bout dat time de nigger shur'ff he come runnin' down dar ter urres' de man w'ut done de shootin'. You see, w'en Jack Harper b'en shot, some nigger run up to de cote-house an' holler dat somebody done kilt Cap'n Jack, an' he bein' a 'Publican, de jedge holler out, 'Mr. Shur'ff,

go down an' urres' de man w'ut kill Cap'n Harper.'

" De man w'ut tol' de jedge dunno who 'twas done de shootin', so de nigger shur'ff come er runnin', an' jes' 'fo' he got dar he holler, ' Whar dat white man w'ut done dat shootin'? You jes' watch me urres' him.' Now, dat nigger shur'ff b'long ter Cap'n Als'on 'fo' de wah, but he lit out soon ez de Yankee ahmy come erlong, an' de scalerwags an' carpetbaggers had him 'pinted shur'ff.

" He ain't had no idee dat de jedge sont him to urres' his ol' Marster, so w'en he turn de cornder an' see Cap'n Als'on leanin' kinder keerless an' graceful-lak erg'in' a tree wid a pistil in his han', dat was de s'prizedest an' skeerdest nigger ebber I see since I was bo'n. Soon's he see Cap'n Als'on he tuk off his hat an' bow an' say, ' Good evenin', Cap'n Als—er—er—Marse Angus.' He 'member his manners an' say ' Marse Angus,' when he 'ten' ter say ' Cap'n Als'on.' Den he say, ' Kin you tell me, Cap'n—er—Cap'n—er—Marse Angus, who 'twas shoot dat man w'ut was kilt?' De Cap'n look at him right hard an' den he say, ' Yes, I did. Did you come to urres' me?' ' Yes, sah; de jedge sont me to urres' de man w'ut done de shootin'; but I didn' had no idee 'twas you, an' I ain't gwine ter try ter urres' you, 'ca'se I know you ain't go let no nigger do dat.' Den de Cap'n say, ' Now, you go back an' tell dat jedge dat a

gen'man don't let a nigger shur'ff ner er carpetbag jedge urres' him, an' dat nigger lef' in er trot.

" Now, dat shur'ff had a depperty, a black nigger, w'ut was in de Yankee ahmy, an' he c'd sorter read an' write, an' w'en he heerd Cap'n Als'on done de shootin' dat nigger 'gin ter swell roun' pow'ful. He say one er dem 'ristercrats done de shootin' an' he gwine down dar an' show him how er 'Publican cul-lud ossifer kin 'scort er 'ristercrat ter jail. He walk up tolurbel close ter Marster an' de Cap'n an' say, ' Is yo' name Als'on? ' Atter er while Cap'n Als'on say slow an' cool, ' Yes, dat's my name. Is you goin' ter urres' me? Is you got er wahunt? ' De depperty say, ' No, but I'm de depperty high shur'ff. ' Den de Cap'n kinder squinch his eyes up close ter gedder an' sorter bite his un'er lip, an' dat nigger 'gin ter turn ashy. I tuk a kinder glancin' look at de Cap'n an' den I say, ' Nigger, does you wanter eat yer supper in hell? Ef you don' you better lef' dis place quick. '

" Dat nigger 'gin ter trimble, an' den de Cap'n speak erg'in, an' ev'y wu'd come out lak er bullet outen er gun. ' You damned, imperdent black scoundrel, ef you don' move in er seccun' I'll teach you some sense an' some manners! ' an' he kinder 'gin ter finger wid de trigger er his pistil, an' sho' as yo bo'n dat nigger bu'n de win' gittin' erway f'um dar.

"Now, Cap'n Als'on didn' 'ten' ter shoot dat nigger sho' 'nuff. He knowed de nigger gwine ter le'be. Cap'n Als'on nebber did shoot er man, 'cept Jack Harper. Dat nigger come f'um de Norf an' he was sho' de boss fool ef he t'ink a quality white man lak Cap'n Als'on gwine let any nigger shur'ff urres' him.

"Atter de depperty gone, Marster an' Cap'n Als'on went down ter whar er consterbul, er white man, was stan'in', an' Marster say, 'Consterbul, Cap'n Als'on s'renders ter you, an' you tek him right ter de jestis ob de peace.' An' dey all walk down to de jestis' office.

"De jestis riz an' bow w'en Marster come in, an' de consterbul make some kind er 'plaint 'g'inst Cap'n Als'on an' swored ter it, an' de jestis writ somepin' in his book; den Marster ask whar was de county pussecutin' 'torney, 'ca'se he knowed de deestrick pussecutin' 'torney was at de big cote-house. De little pussecutin' 'torney come in an' Marster say, 'Dis 'fendant is ready ter give bond.' Den de 'torney say, 'I don' know ez dat he is 'title' ter bon's.' But Marster ain't pay no 'tenshun ter him; but he tu'n to de jestis an' sayed, 'Under de law when er man don't ax fer 'zaminin' trial, an' dar ain't no proof 'gin' him 'cept dat he kilt er ahmed man, he 'title' ter bon'.'

"De jestis, who was proud ter have Mars-

ter practise in his little cote, bowed an' sayed, 'Dat's de law, Cunnel Marshall.' Dat jestis lib in one er Marster's houses, an' owed him right den 'bout six mont's rent. Den de jestis say, 'How much bon' kin de 'fendant make?' Marster say it didn't mek no dif-funce, mek it ten thousan'; an' de jestis say all right, an' Marster sign it ez s'curity, an' er whole lot er quality-gen'man's say dey wan' put dar names on it, an' de jestis say all right, an' den he proob ob de bon', an' dey turn Cap'n Als'on loose.

"Den de socket jedge ax Marster ef he was de man w'ut went 'fo' de jestis an' mek him let de mudderer loose on bon'. Marster say he was de 'torney w'ut tol' de jestis w'ut de law was, an' he 'beyed it, an' let er gen'man loose on bon,' and dat it was a lawful purceedin'.

"Den dat carpetbag jedge say sorter sco'n'ful an' s'kastic-lak, 'I let you know dar's er nuther lawful purceedin'. I will mek de gran' jury 'dite de ristercrat mudderer an' I'll try him nex' day.'

"Marster look at him hard fer a minnit, an' den he say, 'You as de jedge got no right ter speak ob er 'fendant dat way, an' it mout be well dat you 'member dat. You ain't in de cote-house settin' as jedge all de time, w'en you talk about er gen'man.'

"Dat carpetbag socket jedge sho' was mad, an' he say he gwine mek de gran' jury

'dite Cap'n Als'on right erway, an' try him nex' day fer muddah. Den w'en Marster was 'dressin' de jedge 'bout de case, de jedge ax Marster ef he be'n a lawyer. Marster stretch erbout a foot an' say, ' De *reecords* ob dis cote show dat I was a *prac'sin'* law 'fo' you was bo'n.'

" Den dat jedge swell up lak a frog an' say, ' Be keerful, sah, er I'll fine you hund'ed dollars an' sen' you ter jail fer contempt ob cote.'

" Marster say, ' Ugh! Ef you fine me in p'ortion ter de contemp' I got fer you, you better mek it er millyun.' An' den Marster say he wanter ast who gwine ter colleck de fine an' tek him ter jail, an' de jedge say, ' De shur'ff ob dis cote, ob co'se!' Den ev'ybody in de cote-house mos' die laffin', an' de jedge got so mad he kin skasely see, an' he beat on de table wid er mallet, an' holler, ' Order in cote!' But de folks cain't stop laffin', 'ca'se de idee ob er nigger shur'ff er puttin' his han' on Cunnel Hamilton Marshall, my Marster, wuz so 'dickerlus. Dat shur'ff ain' no mo' gwine ter urres' Marster dan he gwine try ter pick de teef ob er rattlesnake wid er pine straw.

" Jes' den de gran' jury come er marchin' in an' han' de jedge er paper, an' he han' it ter de clu'k er de cote, an' say, ' De 'diment ob your ristercrat fr'en' is done file', an' he be tried in de mornin'.' Den Marster say,

' De law gib us two whole days, but we wabe our rights an' we be ready w'en you say de wu'd.'

" Den de jedge say dar won' be no contin'ence ner puttin' off, an' Marster say, ' We doan' ax none.' Den de jedge say, ' De 'fendant b'en 'dited an' dat bon' ain't good no mo,' an' he tol' de shur'ff ter put Cap'n Als'on in de jail.

" Dat nigger shur'ff walk up bowin' an' scrapin' an' er trimblin', an' Marster heerd w'ut de jedge say, an' he an' Cap'n Als'on sorter smiled, an' dey walk down ter de jail an' in one doah an' out t'udder, an' den go on out ter Marster's house. Den de shur'ff go back an' tell de jedge he put him in jail, an' de jedge ain't know no bettah.

" De nex' day, sho' 'nuff, de trial bergin. It look lak mos' ev'y man in de worl' was dar. Jack Harper's daddy done 'ploy er big 'torney w'ut was a 'Publican an' er scalerwag an' lib in ernudder county, ter help de State's 'torney pussecute de case. Eb'y 'torney in de county want ter help Marster 'fen', an' he perlite an' say ve'y well, but he was de boss lawyer, an' do de big pleadin'.

" Atter er while dey 'mence ter call fer jurymens, an' you nebber seed sich a lot er niggers in all yer life—'niryemens, I b'liebe dey call 'em. Is dat right, boss?"

" Yes, veniremen; that's what they call men summoned for jury service."

" Well, sah, hope er may die, ef dar was ary quality white man in dat bunch; but dar was 'nuff niggers ter pick twenty bale er cotton dat day, an' dat's w'ut dey orter b'en er doin'. Dar was a few scalerwag white men w'ut Marster wouldn' let sleep in his buggy-house, an' dat was de kin' er crowd dey gwine ter pick er jury f'um ter try a quality-gen'-man fer shootin' er mizzurbul scalerwag 'bout slan'er'n' er lady. Now, is yer ebber heerd de beat er dat?

" Onnerstan', boss, I ain't 'busin' er blamin' de niggers. Dey don' know nuttin'. Dey ign'unt, an' dey want de money w'ut de jurymens gits; but it sho' was onjes' ter dem ter put 'em whar dey ain't fittin' ter be. Dey ain't had no l'arnin' fer dat kin' er bus'ness.

" Dey 'gun ter s'leck jurymens, an' dat State's 'torney ain't know much 'bout de niggers er de white men, an' dat lawyer w'ut ole man Harper 'ploy ter h'ep pussecute ain't lib in dis county an' didn't know nuttin'— but you bet Marster knowed ev'y nigger in de county.

" De las' jurymans de clu'k call was name' Simon, a li'l' twis'-leg nigger black as cha'-coal. De State's 'torney say, ' W'ut your name? ' He say, ' Simon. ' Simon what? ' de 'torney say. ' No, sah, ' de nigger say, ' Simon Als'on. ' De 'torney say, ' None er yer smartness. Did you 'long ter de 'fen'ant 'fo' de wah? ' ' I dunno no 'fen'ant. Who he? '

'I mean Cap'n Als'on.' 'No, sah; never is b'long ter him.' 'Kin you try dis case fa'r an' hones' an' right?' 'Yes, sah; dat I kin.' Now, de 'torney ain't wan' ter tek dat nigger, but he done 'jeck ter all de jurymens de law 'low, so he cain't he'p hisse'f, but had ter tek him, an' Marster tuk de nigger fer er jury-man.

"I was leanin' on de railin' close ter de een' er de las' row er jurymens, an' dat li'l' black nigger come roun' mum'lin', talkin' ter hisse'f an' kinder growlin', an' say, 'Co'se I gwine try him fa'r an' hones'. I gwine do 'zactly w'ut Marster say, an' he gwine say de hones' thing. Dat li'l' 'torney was'in' his time talkin' ter me.' An' he sho' was, 'ca'se dat nigger b'en b'long ter Marster an' was bo'n on dis plan'ashun.

"At las' dey got 'leben niggers an' er white man fer jurymens, an' dey call erbout er hun'-erd witness', de mos' ob 'em niggers; but dey couldn't get a nigger ter sw'ar he see Cap'n Als'on had er pistil er shoot na'y time. Dey mem'ry done fail 'em 'tirely, an' de jedge was sho' mad.

"Atter er while de State's 'torney call Chloe Marshall, an' 'way back in de cote-house Chloe holler, 'Heah I is, w'ut you wan' long er me?' Boss, does you know Chloe? Aun' Chloe, ev'ybody call her?"

"No," said Mr. Standwick, smiling. "I have not that pleasure."

" 'Scuse me, boss, I done fergit you ain't lib heah. Ef you did you sho' would er knowed Chloe, fer she's er case an' er cawshun. She black ez er pot, an' mos' ez big ez er hogs'ed, an' ain' erfeered er nobody; but she's good-natured an' ev'ybody laks her, an' she's de outlaffinest nigger tubbesho', an' de funnies' nigger ebber yer seed.

" De State's 'torney say, ' Tek de witness stan', ' an' w'en Aun' Chloe step 'roun', he say, ' Have er seat in dat cheer.' Den dem two had er time fer sho'.

" She say, ' How dat? How kin I tek de stan' an' set in de cheer at de same time? '

" Den de jedge say—he was er carpetbag jedge—sharp-lak, ' Set down, maddum.' Den she sot down, an' tek off her sun-bonnet, mos' ez big ez er waggin-kiver, an' 'mence ter laff, an' she laff twell she shuk lak a tub er hog-foot jelly.

" Den de jedge say, ' Come ter ordah! W'ut you laffin' 'bout? ' but she kep' on laffin' an' er sayin', ' Maddum, maddum—w'en I got ter be maddum? ' an' she sayed de dum part de hardes' an' de longes'.

" De jedge say, ' Ain't you a mar'd 'oman? '

" ' No,' she say, ' I'se er nigger 'oman an' er widder 'oman. Dar's mah Marster right dar, Cunnel Ham'ton Marshall, an' he ain't nebber call me no maddum! '

" Den de jedge say snappish ez yer please,

'I wan' you to onnerstan' dar ain't no mo' marsters in dis kentry; ev'ybody's free.'

"'Huccome I ain't got no marster?' Chloe say. 'I lak ter know w'en I los' him. I thank Gawd I'se got him. Ef I ain't had him I done starbe ter def er die wid de rumertiz.'

"Den de jedge say, mad ez er hornit, 'Gawn wid de 'zammernashun.' Den de carpetbag State's 'torney r'ar back an' say sor-ter slow-lak, 'W'ut is yo' name?'

"Aun' Chloe stre'ten up an' de cheer screech, an' she say, 'W'ut fer you ax me dat fool queschin? Yer knows mah name good ez I know yourn. Ain' I b'en sellin' yer appuls an' aigs an' all sich ebber since yer b'en comin' heah?'

"'Yes,' he say, 'I know yo' name; but ____'

"'But, nuthin',' she say, 'ef ye know it, w'ut fer you ax me w'ut my name is?'

"Den de 'torney say, 'Well, how ol' is you?'

"'Dat ain' none er yo' bus'ness fer ez I kin see, but I jes' 'bout ol' lak Marster.'

"'I doan' know yer marster ner no udder marster, an' de jedge tol' yer dar ain' no marsters no mo', ol' lady,' de 'torney say, sco'nful-lak.

"Den de ol' lady 'gin ter git hot fer true.

"'Dat's er fac'. You don' know my Marster, 'ca'se he don' mix 'long er yo' kin'. He's

quality-folks f'um erway back, an' de likes er you ain' never gwine ter git inside er his house. He kin tell yer, dough, how ol' I is ef yer so bad off ter fin' out.'

"Den de jedge put in, an' say, 'You tell yer name so de gen'mans in de jury-box 'll know.'

"'But whar is a'y box, an' whar is a'y gen'man, I lak ter know?' Chloe say.

"De jedge say, stiff an' dignerfy-lak, 'Dose twelve gen'mans ober dar is jurymans in de jury-box.'

"'Dar ain' no box dar 'tall an' dar ain' no gen'mans dar, nuther. Dar's some ol' cheers an' benches, an 'leben niggers an' er san'il! po'-tack. Ef you calls de lak er dem gen'mans, I hope yer won' never pick no gen'mans fer me. Ef yer wan' ter see white gen'mans sho' 'nuff, look at Marster an' Cap'n Als'on—dey's quality gen'mans fer true.'

"'Stop!' de jedge say; 'I won' hab any mo' er dat. Dose jurymens is cullud gen'mens, not niggers—cullud gen'mens, I say.'

"I don' see but one nigger gen'man in dis cote-house, an' dat's Ned, Marster's ker-ridge-driver, leanin' dar 'g'inst de railin'. He been wid quality-folks so much an' wait in der big-house so long dat he's er gen'man. I see Brudder Parker, too. He's de pastur er mah chu'ch, an' de out-prayin'is' an' out-preachin'es' nigger preacher you ebber heerd.

"'Stop!' de jedge say, gettin' madder an'

madder. ' Nobody wan's to heah nuthin' 'bout yo' pastur an' his prayin', nur anythin' 'bout yo' marster. Yer ain't got no marster no mo.'

" ' I tell yer, ef I ain't had er Marster an' er Miss Ma'y I done starbe sho', er died wid de rumertiz. Say, Mr. Jedge, is yer ebber had de rumertiz? ' an' ev'ybody bus' out laffin'.

" Den de jedge beat on de table wid his mallet an' fa'rly holler, ' Stop, stop! Rumer-tizum got nuthin' ter do wid me er you er dis case.'

" ' It done had heap ter do wid me' sho's you bo'n, an' ef it git hol' er you, you gwine t'ink it got somepin' ter do wid you too. Ef it do git hol' er you, you jes' git some yearth wu'ms—fish baits, you know—an' mix er li'l' tuppentine an' sweet ile wid 'em, 'an' rub yo' j'ints, an'—'

" But de jedge kep' beatin' an' er holl'in', ' Stop, stop! I'll fine you an' sen' you ter jail.'

" ' How kin yer fin' me w'en I ain' los'? I'm right heah, bless yer soul, Mr. Jedge, whar dat nigger shur'ff tol' me ter come. I am heah ter tell de truf an' yer swored me ter tell it, an' de fus' thing I heerd atter I got heah was a fool queschin an' er lie. Dat li'l' State's 'torney ax me w'ut's mah name, an' he know mah name good ez he do his'n; an' den yer tol' me I mus' tell it ter de gen'mans

in de jury-box, w'en dar ain' no gen'mans ner no jury-box nuther. Now you got it.'

"Den de jedge say, 'Ef yer don' answer de queschins I'll sen' you ter jail.'

"'Ain' nobody ax no queschin 'cept w'ut's mah name, an' de man w'ut ax dat know mah name an' dem nigger jurymens knows it. Den w'ut de use er mah tellin' er dem w'ut dey know 'fo' dey ax me?'

"'I tell you I'll send you to jail.'

"'I lak ter ax yer, Mr. Jedge, who gwine tek me ter jail?'

"Den de jedge look down at de ol' nigger an' squinch his eyes an' grit his teef an' say, 'De shur'ff er dis cote 'll tek you.' An' dat jedge sho' was hot in de collar.

"Den Aun' Chloe fa'rly double up an' holler, an' grab up her sun-bunnit an' beat it on de flo' an' on her lap, an' rock backurds an' foruds, an' laff twell she cry, an' say, 'Der shur'ff er dis cote! Lorsy mussey, Mister Jedge, dat li'l' yaller nigger cain't tuk me now'eres 'tall. I'll jes' set down on him an' squush de life outen him; den yer won't hab no shur'ff 'tall.'

"By dis time de jedge fin' out gittin' mad ain't do no good, so he say, 'Let her tell it her own way.'

"Den Aun' Chloe say, 'Now yer talkin', an' de jedge laff twell he shuk.

"Den de State's 'torney say, 'Now, Aun' Chloe——'

“ ‘Eh, eh, eh, eh! ’ she bre’k in. ‘ I tol’ yer dat yer know mah name, an’ sho’ ’nuff yer does.’

“ Den de ’torney say, ‘ Gawn an’ talk ter de gen’mans ob de jury.’

“ ‘Ain’ I tell yer dar ain’ no gen’mans on de jury? All un ’em ’ceptin’ Brudder Parker is co’n-fiel’ niggers. But I gwine talk ter ’em f’um der shoul’er. Dar’s Tom Annerson; he b’en out de pen’tenshy ’bout three munt’s, whar dey sont him fer stealin’ Marster’s yearlin’. Dar’s Bill Simmons, an’ he’s de outdashuses’ an’ de beatenis’ scoun’el in de county; an’ dar’s Jim Banyin, w’ut’s er ’zorter an’ er hyme-singer an’ er shouter f’um de forks er de creek—but sho’ ez you bo’n, chickens bettah roos’ on der top pole w’en he’s gwine f’um camp-meetin’. Den dar’s li’l’ twis-laig Simon, I lak ter not seed him. He’s er fine jurymans, he is! Say, Mr. Jedge, does yer know huccome Simon’ laig ter be twissed lak it is? Well, I tell yer. You know Marster had er ol’ mule name Jane, an’ she was a sho’-’nuff debbul. Well, Simon he ’low ez how he kin ride any kin’ er mule-brute, an’ he jump on Jane, an’ she hump up her back an’ fling him over er stake an’ rider fence, an’ bre’k his laig, an’ de doctor got it crooked, an’—’

“ But de jedge holler, ‘ Never min’ ’bout Simon an’ de mule. Tell ’bout dis case.’

“ ‘ Well den, w’ut yer wan’ me ter tell? ’

" Den de State's 'torney say, ' Does yer know de 'fen'ant at de bar? '

" ' I ain' seen no bar. Ef yer got a bar fer de witness' w'ut come heah, I sho' lak ter hab er toddy right now.' Den de jedge laff out loud.

" ' Do you know Cap'n Angus Als'on? ' de 'torney say.

" ' Know Cap'n Angus Als'on? Co'se I knows him. Ain' I b'en knowin' him sence he was bo'n? W'ut de use er yer axin' me sich quescchin lak dat? '

" ' Did you see Cap'n Als'on shoot Cap'n Harper? ' de 'torney say, short ez pie-crus'.

" ' W'ut Cap'n Harper dat? I ain' know any sich pusson 'tall.'

" ' Cap'n Jack Harper.'

" ' Eh, eh! W'en he got ter be er cap'n? W'ut he cap'n ob? '

" ' Dat none er yo' bus'ness,' de 'torney say; ' but he was cap'n in de State merlisher.'

" ' Lors er mussey! Does you call er white man cap'n w'ut strut 'roun' 'fo' er lot er niggers wid er red kalliker sash 'roun' his wais'? Ef you wanter see er sho'-nuff cap'n w'ut fit lak er cattermount, dar he is right dar—Cap'n Als'on.'

" ' I ask you did you see Cap'n Als'on shoot Jack Harper? '

" ' How I ken see fru' all dem niggers? I heerd a pistil shoot, an' seed Jack Harper on de groun', but I dunno huccome him dar.

Dey say a bullet kilt him. I don' know dat, 'ca'se I ain't see no bullet.'

" Well, sah, boss, dey bull-rag an' cross talk dat ol' nigger 'bout er half er day, but dey ain't nebber got outen her dat she see any er de shootin'. At las' de jedge say, ' You kin go; nothin' kin be got outen you.' Den she say, ' Much erbleege, Jedge; an' I hopes ef you got de rumertiz yer won' fergit de yearth wu'ms an' de tuppentine an' de sweet ile, 'ca'se it sho' is er gran' remerdy fer de rumertiz.' An' ez fer ez dey heerd her she was still er gwine on talkin'.

" Dey kep' er callin' niggers fer witness', but dar ain' na'y one sw'ar he see Cap'n Als'on shoot er single shot; but atter dey done keep on 'zamernin' de shur'ff an' de depperty, dey say dey heah Cap'n Als'on say he shot de 'ceased man; an' atter er while Marster say, sco'nful like, ' We don' 'ny dat de 'fen'ant kill him.'

" Den de State's 'torney say, ' We res'; an' he sho' look lak he was tyud ob dat job. Den Marster call witness' ter proob dat Jack Harper slan'er Cap'n Als'on dawter. Den de State's 'torney an' de man w'ut ol' man Harper 'ploy to he'p pussecute, jump up an' objeck an' r'ar an' scotch an' read er lot er books, an' den Marster say he got er right to proob it, en' he read books, an' say he got er hun'erd witness' ter proob dat Jack Harper slan'er er puah young lady scan'lous; an' he

argerfy an' tell w'ut de witness' gwine sw'ar
twell de jurymen done heerd it all.

"Den de jedge say, 'De 'jection ob de
State is 'stained.' Den Marster say, 'Ve'y
well, ef we cain't proob de truff, we trus' to
Goddermighty an' de jury.' Den de pleadin'
bergin.

"De li'l' State's carpetbag 'torney he pitch
an' snort an' holler an' sweat, an' tell de jury
ter hang Cap'n Als'on. But dat jury waitin'
ter heah f'um Marster, an' atter er while
Marster bergin. Boss, I wish you'd heerd
dat speech. Hit sho' was a speech f'um taw.
Dar ain' nebber b'en no sich pleadin' heerd
in dat cote-house. De State's 'torney say
Cap'n Als'on rich an' kin buy de bigges'
loryur in de State; but Marster say, 'I let yer
know I don' tek money f'um my neighbor an'
my fr'en'. I 'fen' him 'ca'se it am w'ut he
orter done.' Dem niggers knowed who was
er talkin', an' dat dey better lis'en. 'Bout
half un 'em b'long ter Marster 'fo' freedom
come in rotashun, an' de res' un 'em all b'en
he'p' by him wid money en s'plies, an' de
white man lib on one er his san'ill fahms an'
allers behin' wid his rent. Marster sho' did
retch out atter dem niggers.

"Sometimes we'n Marster don' be nowhars
'roun', I morks him an' meks dat speech fer
de white gen'mens. You ort ter see dem nig-
gers w'en he say, 'De Bibul say, you mus' do
lak you wanter be done by, an' ef you don' do

dat way you gwine ter hell an' bu'n furebber an' furebber. Ef you was bein' tried an' Cap'n Als'on was on de jury, you would wan' him ter let yer go free; den, 'cordin' ter de Bibul, you got ter 'quit him, dat mean you got ter let him go free; an' ef you don't, at de Jedgment Day de Great Jedge gwine ter pull de Bibul on yer, an' you gwine ter hell ter roas' thu' 'ternity, 'ca'se de Bibul de highes' law.' An' Marster ben' down an' talk 'way d-o-w-n in his chis', an' shuk his finger at dem niggers, an' say, 'I tell you ter 'quit Cap'n Als'on! Ain't yer gwine ter do it?' Den hope I may swaller my shoe ef ev'y nigger on dat jury ain't done nod he haid good ez ter say, 'Yes, Marster; we gwine tu'n him loose.' I jes' lean over an' lis'en ter Marster twell I fergit whar I was. He jes' lif' me up in de a'r, an' I fergit 'bout de jedge an' de cote-house, an' holler, 'Hooray fer Marster!' Jes' den de jedge happen ter be er lookin' to'rds me, an' he say, 'I fine you ten dollars fer 'temp ob cote.' Marster riz an' say, 'Dat's my kerridge-driver. I pay his fine,' an' he flung er ten-dollar bill ter de clu'k er de cote, jes' lak he mean ter say ef he pay fer all de 'temp he feel 't would tek all his cotton crap.

"Well, sah, boss, w'en you git ter talkin' sollum ter er lot er niggers 'bout hell an' de jedgment you got 'em gwine, an' Marster sho' had dem 'leben faded.

"Dat loryur w'ut was he'pin' ter pussecute made de las' speech, an' he sho'ly did split de a'r. You could er heerd him er mile an' er half—but he b'en was'in' his bref.

"W'en he quit de jedge 'mence ter read er gre't long paper, but 'fo' he start he say, 'Gen'men ob de jury, now I'll charge you.' Den twis'-laig Simon say, 'Mr. Jedge, I t'ought we gwine ter git pay fer settin' heah 'stid er chargin' us fer it.' An' den ev'ybody jes' laff twell dey cry. De jedge say, 'Set down, sah,' an' Simon drap back lak he was shot. Den de jedge read a gre't big paper. He jes' well b'en er readin' ter er daid mule, 'cause dem niggers ner dat white man nei-der wa'n' gwine ter do nuthin' 'g'inst w'ut Marster tell 'em.

"W'en de jedge done readin', de nigger shur'ff start down de sta'rs ter tek de jury ter de room whar dey gwine stay twell dey 'gree on er vuddick. Jes' ez dey was er gwine down de sta'rs dar was two white men right behin' 'em, an' one un 'em say ter t'other, 'W'ut you think 'bout de case?' De other man say he think dey will 'quit Cap'n Als'on er it 'll be er hung jury. De las' nigger in de line er jury-mens was a bow-leg, bandy-shank, mongul nigger, an' he heerd dat white man say it mout be er hung jury, en' w'en he got ter de bottom er de sta'rs he lit out right to'rds de creek bottom. De nigger shur'ff hollered fer him ter come back, but dat nigger keep gwine.

Purty soon he struck er stump an' fell ker-flummux, en' de shur'ff catch him, an' say, 'Whar you gwine? W'ut you runnin' fer?' De nigger was blowin' an' pantin' an' he say, 'I—er—er—er heerd er white man say er—er—er ef de jury don' 'quit Cap'n Als'on de jury gwine ter be hung. I's fer 'quittin' him, but I dunno w'edder all dem jurymens is gwine ter 'gree ter dat er no, an' I ain' gwine ter be hunged fer na'y man in de worl', not dis nigger, no, sah!' De shur'ff 'splanify ter de fool nigger an' he go 'long wid de udders.

"Bout er hour dey come back, an' de white man done sorter writ er vuddick dat Cap'n Als'on ain't guilty an' orter go free lak Marster say. Whoopee! de peepul sho' did holler an' fling up dey hats, an' de jedge was mad thu' and thu'.

"Marster an' Cap'n Als'on git up an' lif' dey hats ter de jedge an' walk out er de cote-house ahm in ahm, an' de bigges' trial ebber was in dis county come ter er een'."

Mr. Standwick had listened with deep interest to Ned's recital of the tragedy and the trial, and when Ned said the verdict was not guilty, he exclaimed, "What! do you mean to say they acquitted Captain Alston entirely —did not fine him or send him to jail or to the penitentiary?"

"Co'se not, boss. Cap'n Als'on, he's er quality gen'man, an' down in dis kentry dey don' sen' no man lak dat—ner fer dat matter,

no udder man—ter no pen'tenshy fer shootin'
a low-down man w'ut slan'er er lady.

"Den, boss, dem nigger jurymens an' dat
white man know which side dey bread
buttered."

"With such a jury no verdict would have
been surprising."

"Dat didn' mek no diff'unce 'tall, boss.
Ef dar had b'en twelbe er de qualityes' men
in de county on dat jury 'twould er b'en de
same way. I heerd Marster say it's de law
w'ut ain't writ in no book, but it's in de hearts
er men. An', boss, mos' mens, 'speshully
niggers, follow dey hearts rudder dan dey
hails."

"The facts you relate," said Mr. Stand-
wick, "are remarkable, and I am puzzled.
Up where I live, Captain Alston would have
been convicted, maybe he might have been
hanged; but I know he is a gallant, honorable,
pure-hearted gentleman, and a most lovable
man."

"Dat's so, boss; I done tell you dat. You
fin' him true blue ebb'ry time. He perlite ter
white an' black, he good ter niggers, he lub
chillun—but no man mustn't fool erlong er
him er his fambly, er tetch him whar he's
proud."

CHAPTER XI

AFTER dinner Mr. Standwick took a restful afternoon nap, then wrote a short letter. Then, feeling sure that in no way could he be better entertained or more interested than by talking with Ned, or rather in hearing Ned talk, he reminded him that he had promised to tell him how the Captain saved the house.

"Now, boss, dat's a tolerbul long story, an' I hab ter start back a good ways ter mek you onnerstan' it.

"Well, you see de night de Feddul so'gers bu'ned de house whar Miss Lucy was visitin', Cap'n Chawles Stan'ick, de Feddul cap'n, happen' ter be passin' dat way; but he got dar too late ter stop de fiah, an' he was sho' mad. He fin' Miss Lucy stan'in' in de rain an' col' in de night jes' 'fo' day, an' he pow'ful perlite an' ax her whar she lib; but she bein' a sho'-nuff rebbul, ez you call 'em, she don' wan' talk erlong er no Yankee; but she say she Cunnel Marshall's dawter an' tell him whar she lib.

"Den he tuk his obercoat an' ax her ter put it on. Soon's she see him whar it was good light she mos' faint, 'ca'se she think it was Cap'n Arthur, he look so much lak him; but atter er while she see de diff'unce.

" He fas'en his hoss an' fin' her saddle-hoss in de big lot, an' ketch him an' put her saddle on him, an' he'p her up an' 'scort her home. He ain't sot his foot in de house, but he jes' rid up ter de big gate an' lif' his hat an' bow; an' bein's how she was a high-bo'n lady, ob co'se she bow an' thank him kin'ly an' he rid away.

" When she come ter de house an' tell Marster all 'bout her 'sper'ence an' tell him how a Feddul cap'n rid home wid her an' ain't speak a w'ud ter her, an' ain't try ter fo'ce his 'tentions on her, Marster say, ' Thank Gawd, dar's one gent'man in de Yankee ahmy.' You see his chile, de ve'y idol ob his heart, b'en most bu'nt to death fust an' freeze nex', an' he was sho' mad.

" She tell her pa dat de Feddul cap'n was so much lak Cap'n Arthur her eyes could sca'sely tell de diff'unce, but her heart tol' her. 'Cordin' ter Marster, Cap'n Chawles hadder kin' er innerpen'ent comp'ny, sorter scoutin' comp'ny, an' he tuk it whar he please, an' mos' er de time he stay to'rds de hin' een' er de Feddul ahmy, to look out fer dem niggers w'ut was stealin' an' bu'nin'.

" Er big part er de ahmy camp mos' er week jes' b'low heah, an' de way dem nigger so'gers steal an' bu'n an' 'buse peepul was scan'lous.

" One day er bunch un 'em go ter Cap'n Als'on's house. Dey heerd he wuz in de ahmy

on our side, an' dey 'ten ter rob his house an' den bu'n it. Dar wa'n' no pusson dar 'cep'n Miss Jean an' her aunty an' de brudder w'ut b'en shot in de Fed'rit ahmy, an' he was on cru'ches.

" Dem nigger so'gers jes' walk right in an' 'gin ter grab silber an' smash picters an' hunt fer watches an' rings an' de lak, an' de two po' ladies an' de crippul so'ger cain't he'p deyse'ves. Jes' de day befo' Cap'n Chawles had rid up an' got 'er drink er water, an' he see Miss Jean; but she ain't speak ter him, 'ca'se, boss, dese young quality white ladies did sho' 'spise de Yankee so'gers. He tell de nigger gal w'ut han' him de water ter tell her mistiss he gwine ter sen' some er his men ter guard de house.

" Well, nex' day he was ridin' up ter de house wid ten er his men, an' was gwine ter le'be de guard, w'en he see dem niggers ober dar an' he know dey up ter some debilment, so he an' his men wen' down dar in a gallop jes' in time ter see a big nigger gittin' erway wid silberw'ar an' julery, an' ernudder one mek lak he gwine shoot de crippul young man 'ca'se he don' tell whar he got money hid, an' ernudder one was jes' 'bout ter git hol' er Miss Jean, an' de low-down white ossifer was 'bout ter set fire ter de house.

" De Cap'n's men b'liebed in him thu' an' thu', an' dey didn' 'noy women-folks, ner rob houses ner bu'n 'em.

"W'en dey see de nigger so'ger atter de cripplul young man, an' ernudder one atter Miss Jean, dey pull down on 'em an' drap 'em both daid as er doah nail, an' den de balluns un 'em an' de low-down white ossifer bre'k out er dat house an' run lak skeered rabbits; but de Cap'n's men tuk a pop at de ossifer an' drap him too, thank Gawd.

"Dem niggers w'ut 'scaped done gone an' tell de colonel ob de rig'ment dat de rebbuls ober dar 'tacked 'em, an' de colonel lit out ober ter Cap'n Als'on's house, an' w'en he see de two daid niggers an' de daid ossifer he ax who kilt 'em, an' Cap'n Chawles lif' he cap an' s'lute an' say, 'My men, sah'; an' he tell de cunnell dem niggers an' de white man was 'sultin' an' robbin' ladies an' er cripplul so'ger, an' tryin' ter bu'n de house, an' de cunnel say, 'Good, Cap'n; wish you'd er kilt 'em all.'

"When Marster heerd dis he say, 'Thank Gawd, dar's two gent'men in de Yankee ahmy.' Marster mighty seldom speak onkin' er say hard wu'ds, but he was mad fer true.

"Den Cap'n Chawles say, 'Five ob you men stay heah an' perteck dis house twell I tell you ter quit. De res' ob you go wid me ter de udder big house on de udder hill 'bout er mile; I know who lib dar.' Den he lif' his hat an' say, 'I will 'scort you ladies an' dis cripplul gen'man ter Cunnel Marshall's ef you wish.'

"Den Cap'n Als'on's son say he thank him,

but he an' his aunty will stay ef he le'be some er his men ter guard de house; but he be ve'y glad ef he tek Miss Jean. Her ridin'-hoss was in de hoss-lot. Miss Jean ain't say er wu'd, 'cept she say sorter low ter her brudder, 'De Cap'n jes' lak Cap'n Arthur; I kin mos' b'liebe it's him.'

"In er few minnits Miss Jean's high-step-pin' black was saddle' up, an' she tuk him an' led him ter de mountin' block, an' hop on, an' she 'ten' she ain' see Cap'n Chawles, an' rid off. She ain' 'ten' ter be imperlite, but she cain't fergit she suddern and he Yankee so'ger; but dat ve'y minnit she was hopin' ez how he was gwine ride erlong side her.

"De Cap'n ain' tek no 'fense, but he an' five er his men 'scort her ter de big gate, an' den all un 'em lif' dey hats, an' she rid in; but she lady bo'n lak Miss Lucy, an' she tu'n an' bow pow'ful graceful, an' smile an' say she ve'y much 'bleeged, an' very much 'debted ter 'em, an' she thank 'em ve'y kin'ly, an' den she rid off; an' dem so'gers think she de purties' thing dey ebber see in dey lives; an' der wa'n' nothin' purtier 'ceptin' Miss Lucy, an' 'twas nip an' tuck 'twix' dem two which was de purties' an' de sweetes'.

"Cap'n Chawles he ain't tek his eyes off'n her twell she out er sight, den he say, 'She's a proud an' purty li'l' rebbul'; an' his heart was gwine pitty-pat right den.

"Miss Jean b'en jes' much at home here

ez she b'en at Rose Hill,—dat's Cap'n Als'on's place,—an' she 'mejutly bergin ter tell how de Cap'n sabe de house an' de silber, an' how orful 'twas ter see men kilt, ef dey was robbers, an' all 'bout de turribul time; an' den w'ut you reckon she say, boss?"

"I am sure I don't know," said Mr. Standwick, "and I will not undertake even to guess what a charming young lady would say under such circumstances."

"Well, boss, wimmen folks sho' is cur'us, an' dar ain' no 'countin' fer 'em, 'speshully w'en er good-lookin' man wid brass buttons en er swode is cavortin' 'roun' 'em.

"Now you rickerleck, her house b'en rob', her silber b'en stole, she b'en 'sulted, an' dey hatter kill er couple er niggers an' er white man ter sabe de house f'um bu'nin'; but soon she done tellin' 'bout all de ruckshun ter her house, she clap her han's an' twis' her haid de cokettis' kin' er way, an' say, 'Oh, Lucy, he is jes' ez han'some ez he kin be, an' jes' ez graceful, an' got de lublis' eyes an' de sweetes' smile! O, I jes' wish he wa'n't er old mizzurbul Yankee!' an' she kept er gwine on dat er way. I says ter mahse'f, 'He do be Yankee sho' 'nuff, but he's er gen'man'; an' I see de symptum ob trouble ob de heart fer a young 'oman.

"Now don' dat beat de Jews! Robbin', an' bu'nin', an' killin', an' er man save her home an' 'scort her ter er safe place, an' she

won' speak ter him, an' soon he gone she 'mence ter ca'y on ober his han'someness an' his lubly eyes an' his sweet smile. 'Tain' no use talkin' 'bout 'vidin' lines an' flags an' nuniforms w'en er purty 'oman git her glance fas'en on er good-lookin' man, an' er so'ger man at dat.

" Miss Jean stay here 'ca'se she was lak one er Miss Ma'y's chillun, an' de nex' day dar sho' was lots er trubbel an' 'citemeht right heah on dis place, an' de Feddul ahmy los' er few mo' nigger so'gers, thank Gawd. But, boss, you hab ter 'scuse me 'bout er hour twell I kin go ter de cotton-patch an' fling my eyes fer a li'l' w'ile on dem free niggers. I 'speck right now dey 'sputin' 'bout polerticks er 'ligion, an' dey don' know nuttin' 'bout neider one; but dey let de cotton be los' w'ile dey stan' dar an' squabbul."

Ned returned promptly, and resumed his story of how the Captain saved the house.

" You 'member, boss, I tol' you 'bout seein' a li'l' yaller nigger in N' Yawk, an' dat I had to lef' him quick 'fo' I stomp him in de yearth fer sayin' he comin' down Souf, an' gwine call on mah young Mistiss, de imperdent half-breed dat he was. An' I tol' you I done see him ergin."

" How did you happen to see him, and where? "

" Well, you see, boss, dat de bigges' part ob de Feddul ahmy ain' go right by dis house,

but go 'way back er de plan'ashun, an' dar wa'n' but mighty few so'gers stragglin' er roun' twell de ahmy camped down b'low heah.

"I was down dar lookin' atter de fences, w'ich wa'n' 'sturbed, 'ca'se w'en de ve'y fust Fedduls comed in dese parts de 'mander ob 'em was er man w'ut he'p Marster fight de Mex'kins 'fo' dis las' wah, an' he come right ter dis house an' lef' er order wid Marster dat de udder Fedduls 'spected fer a long time, twell nigger so'gers 'mence ter 'pear in dese parts.

"De Feddul ahmy kep' er marchin' by an' er marchin' by, twell it look lak dere was er millyun so'gers.

"Long to'lds de hin' een' dar was er lot er niggers wid white cap'ns, an' one comp'ny stop an' de men all lay down ter res'; but a li'l' yaller nigger corp'ral er some sich ossifer kep' er lookin' at me, an' at las' he say, 'Ain' I seen you befo' somewhar?' I say mebbe so, I b'en dar. Den he say, 'You needn' git smart. Ain' I seen you in N' Yawk?' Den I say, 'Mebbe you is. I b'en dar befo' de wah'; an' den I see some lakness ob de li'l' yaller hotel waiter, an' sho' 'nuff 'twas him.

"He had some kin'er yaller stuff on de sleebe er his coat, an' er li'l cap 'bout big ez er jay bird nes' dat set on one side his haid, an' he say, 'So you see I'se here. I tol' you I was er comin', an' we gwine ter camp not ve'y fer f'um heah; an' ef it ain' too fer ter

whar you lib, I think I call on dat purty young lady you call Miss Lucy. Is you still libbin' wid dat ol' man you call Marster?"

"I say, 'Yes, he my Marster yit; an' he lib ober yander 'bout fo' mile.' Den he say, 'I be ober soon ter see yo' young Mistiss; an' I say ter mahse'f, 'Nigger, you sho'ly ain' low ter go back whar you come f'um; you breedin' er scab right now.'"

"But you were going to tell me how the Captain saved the house," said Mr. Standwick.

"I'se gwine ter do dat ve'y thing, boss, an' I'm er gittin' to'rds it now; an' you gwine ter see de 'nexshun 'twix' w'ut I b'en er sayin' an' de sabin' er de house. I lef' dat nigger, but I ain't had no idee he gwine be big 'nuff fool ter come ter my Marster's house sho' 'nuff; but I wanter debbul Hester, an' see her git up an' tu'n herse'f loose, so w'en I git home I tell her how I see dat li'l' yaller nigger w'ut we bofe see in N' Yawk, an' she say, 'Tubbesho' you didn't!' an' I say, 'I sw'ar I see him. An', Hester, he say he gwine come ter call on Miss Lucy.'

"Den Hester stop sweepin' de settin'-room, an' she lean on de brum an' look at me hard fer a long time, an' I bergin ter git nervyus, wid her got er good holt on dat brum; but atter er while she say, 'G'long 'way f'um heah, you ol' fool Ned, 'fo' I gib you a swipe wid dis brum. You know dar ain' na'y nig-

ger in de worl' bigger fool 'nuff ter come ter call on my Mistiss' dawter. You know dat de riches', qualitis' young white gen'mens is proud ter ride' long er side er her, an' when Marster was in Congiss at Washin'ton de Queen' son was pow'ful hope up 'ca'se he was 'lowed ter dance wid her; an' now you stan' dar talkin' 'bout er li'l' yaller Yankee nigger so'ger callin' on her. Ugh! You sho' is gone plum crazy!'

"Den I say, ' 'Tain' me gone crazy, it mus' be dat li'l' whipper-snapper nigger, an' I b'liebe it is.' 'Well,' she say, 'he mout come; but I don' b'liebe dar ebber was a nigger but w'ut got mo' sense 'an ter come ter call on mah young Mistiss. De Lawd have mussey! De idee! A nigger talkin' 'bout settin' up in Marster's parlor 'long er side er Miss Lucy—w'ut am de worl' er comin' to? I jes' soon 'speck ter see Marster's ridin'-hoss leadin' er de 'tillyun at de next Christmas dance. But ef he do come, Ned, an' you see him 'fo' he gits heah, you jes' lem me know, an' I boun' I 'ten ter him. I bet you w'en I git done wid him he b'en los' a lot er dat imperdence he got now.'

"De ve'y nex' day was er Sadday, an' Hester was er cleanin' an' er scourin' de house f'um top ter bottom. You onnerstan', boss, she ain't doin' wu'k herse'f, 'ca'se she sco'n to bemean herse'f 'nuff ter scour; but she mek two co'n-fiel' niggers f'um de quarters do de

wu'k w'ile she super'ten. Hester pow'ful fer ter super'ten. She hab great big tub er soap-suds an 'er mop in it, an' she done mek de two niggers fling saf' lye soap all ober de hall an' de po'ch an' de steps.

"Jes' 'bout dat time I see a nigger ridin' down de road, an' hope er may die ef it wa'n' dat li'l' nigger so'ger f'um N' Yawk. I tol' Hester he was er comin' an' she say, 'I wouldn't er b'liebe dar was sich er fool nigger in de whole worl'. You sho'ly mus' be er jokin', Ned.' Den I say, 'You jes' look outen de doah an' you kin see him.' She flung up her han's an' say, 'De Lawd he'p us! Dat sho'ly is de outbeatines' an' imperdentes' nigger ebber I seed. But I'se ready fer him.'"

The old negro paused and sat in silence for a moment, looking hard at Mr. Standwick, as if to make his words more impressive, and then said slowly, "Boss, is you ebber heerd ob any imperdence ekal ter dat ob a nigger comin' ter call on mah young Mistiss?"

Mr. Standwick did not seem very much impressed. "He was quite bold even for a soldier in the army, if he was a soldier. He had never been introduced to the young lady, and she did not know whether he was a gentleman."

"Gen'man! He was er nigger so'ger an' er yaller nigger at dat; an' ez fer him bein' interjuce ter my young Mistiss, ef he lib twell

he be so ol' dat Methuserlum was a baby 'long er side er him, he ain' gwine ter be interjuce ter her nuther."

"Why," said Mr. Standwick, "we have very few colored people up where I live; but worthy young colored men sometimes walk with young white women and call on them, and the young soldier may have proved agreeable to your young Mistress as a visitor."

The old negro made no immediate reply, but rose and stepped back a step or two, and gazed fixedly at Mr. Standwick, his face expressing perplexity and amazement.

He had heard a white man, a gentleman, who spoke with evident sincerity, make statements which revealed sentiments and conditions that to him were absolutely incomprehensible. When he had somewhat recovered himself he stepped quickly toward Mr. Standwick, near enough to touch him, and said,

"'Scuse me, boss, I don' mean no disre-speck, but it seem lak you don' comperhen' w'ut I mean. I say dat a nigger, an' er yaller nigger at dat, say he gwine call on my young Mistiss, an' I'm sartin' you ain't nebber heah de lak er sich imperdence."

"As I have said, Ned, it was hardly proper for him, a stranger, to do so, unless he had been invited by some of the family."

This statement was made with evident sincerity, but it was more than Ned could stand.

"Goddermighty, boss!" he exclaimed,

and in his surprise and excitement he took hold of the wrist of Mr. Standwick with a tight grasp; but he immediately released it, and bowed low, apologizing humbly for his impulsive action. "Please 'scuse me, boss; I was sho' 'cited; I couldn't 'spress myse'f so's ter mek you onnerstan' mah feelin's w'en I think er dat nigger's imperdence.

"'Vite by de fambly; dis fambly? My Marster 'vite dat nigger? Tubbesho', boss, you cain't onnerstan'. My Marster, Cunnel Marshall, de riches' man in de county, an' de smartis' man, an' de gran'es' man, an' de bes' man in de worl', an' a quality gen'man f'um de groun' up, lak his daddy was befo' him, 'vite a nigger, an' er yaller nigger at dat, an' furdermo' a Yankee so'jer at dat, ter call on his dawter. I sw'ar, boss, you could knock me down wid a fedder.

"Boss, dar ain' na'y nigger bo'n since de fus' nigger Ham 'rived w'ut could go inter Marster's house ter mek a soshul call on mah young Mistiss, long ez I got two ahms an' dar's a club layin' erroun' anywhar handy; an' dat nigger didn' go, nuther."

"Why, you didn't club him, did you?"

"No, sah, I ain' club him; but ha, ha, ha! boss, I wish you could er seen dat nigger w'en he lef' dar. He got down an' hitch he hoss, an' he had dat same li'l' cap stickin' on one side his haid over his yeer, an' he got boots on wid spurs, an' a swode, an' he come step-

pin' quick an' short, lak a stringhalt hoss, er a chicken er walkin' on a hot stove lid; an' I slip 'hin' dat big tree dar an' he ain' see me, so he ma'ch up dese ve'y steps to dis po'ch, an' lif' up de knocker an' fetch it down hard on de doah dat Hester done shet.

"Hester come to de doah, an' dat nigger streten up an' tech his swode an' say: 'Is Miss Marshall in?' Hester look at him up an' down an' back erg'in, an' den she quirl her upper lip twell hit mos' retch ober de een' er her nose, and she say, 'Dat's none er yo' bus'-ness; but I'se here.' An' she jes' lif de mop outen de soap-suds an' fetch it right down on dat nigger's face. His cap flew up in de a'r, an' he tu'n ter run, an' he step on a big daub er saf' soap, an' he fell head fo'mos' down dem steps, an' when he totch de groun' I jes' tuk him by de scruff er de neck an' de laig er his britches an' flung him right in dat fount'in whar de 'teshun well runnin', an' w'en he riz he snort an' cough an' look lak a drownded rat, an' de way he got ter dat hoss an' lit out was a cawshun.

"W'en he outen retch of a club he holler an' say, 'I gwine ter git even wid you!' An' I say, 'All right; 'll be dar w'en you come!' An' den me an' Hester jes' lay down an' laff an' holler an' shout twell I mos' bust de buttons off my britches.

"I say, 'Hester, don' you say nuttin' ter Marster 'bout dat nigger er comin' ter call on

his dawter, 'ca'se ef you do dere gwine ter be trubbel ef he gotter tackle de Yankee ahmy.' So Marster ain' know it 'tall, fer jes' as good luck happen, all de fambly b'en upsta'rs on de back gall'ry, an' ain' see de li'l' nigger comin' er gwine. Well, sah, dat nigger did sho' try ter git eben, an' he come mighty nigh er doin' hit, too.

"Some days atter dat a white sujjunt an' th'ee er de blackes' niggers ebber you seed, an' two yaller niggers come heah to dis house, an' hope I may die ef one un 'em wa'n' dat same li'l' yaller nigger, an' de udder one was wusser 'n him.

"Er nigger-trader come erlong heah jes' 'fo' de wah an' had dis udder yaller nigger fer sale, an' de nigger 'seech Marster ter buy him, 'ca'se he say dat nigger-trader gwine sell him ter dat man Harper w'ut you stop wid t' other night, er some udder mean man. Marster already got mo' niggers den he got any use fer, but he feel sorry fer dat cock-eyed yaller scoun'rel, an' he bo't him an' den tol' de man w'ut sol' him ter move off, 'ca'se Marster jes' nach'lly did 'spise a nigger-trader.

"Dat was de happies' nigger you ebber seed; he fa'rly dance wid joy; but jes' ez soon ez he heerd of er Yankee ahmy he lit out, an' de nex' time I seed him he was right heah. An' w'ut you reckon he come fer? He come ter he'p rob an' bu'n dis house."

"Oh, no! You do not mean that a sergeant and five men came here to rob this house and then burn it?"

"Yes, sah; dey 'lowed ter bu'n dis house. Dey come here ter bu'n dis house whar Marster an' Miss Ma'y an' Miss Lucy an' Hester an' me all done nuss lots er sick an' wounded Yankee so'gers an' ain't charge na'y one un 'em er cent, jes' 'ca'se we feel sorry fer dem in dey suff'rin'. De sujjunt he was de meanes'-lookin' white man an' de lowes'-down-lookin' white man you ebber see. He say, soon as dey rid up, 'Go in an' get de silber an' de watches an' whatebber money de damned ol' 'ristercrat got, dat you kin fin', den we'll ten' ter de house.'

"Now, Marster an' Miss Ma'y an' Miss Lucy an' Miss Jean was in de settin'-room an' de curt'ins was down, an' dey ain' seen de niggers an' de ossifer ride up, so Hester she went 'roun' de back way ter tell Marster she heerd de sujjunt tell de niggers ter rob de house, an' Marster start ter go out; but Miss Ma'y ain't let him, an' lock de door ter keep him in de room.

"Dem niggers ain't pay no 'tenshun ter me 'tall, 'cept dat li'l' yaller nigger w'ut I th'owed in de fount'in, an' he say, 'You see, I done come back, an' I gwine ter 'ten' ter you an' yo' 'ristercrat white folks.' Dat ud-der nigger keep lookin' roun' lak he feered he gwine see Marster, an' atter er while he

went 'roun' whar dem udder niggers was. Den de li'l' yaller nigger pull de blin's open an' see Marster an' Miss Ma'y and Miss Jean an' Miss Lucy an' Hester, all in de settin'-room, an he say, 'Here she is. I reckon I kin call on her now.' Marster got er big six-shooter in his han' an' he start ter bus' out er dat winder an' git at dat nigger, but Miss Ma'y say he musn't go, 'ca'se he cain't do no good, an' he be kilt an' not perdeck 'em, eider. He ain't skeered er nuttin' on de yearth, but he cain't do no good 'g'inst so many. None er dem ladies ain' scream er cry, 'ca'se dey ain' been dat kin'. Miss Ma'y an' Miss Jean an' Miss Lucy an' Hester done drap on dey knees an' pray ter de good Lawd ter 'liver 'em f'um de gre't danger.

"Dem udder niggers an' de sujjunt done gone 'roun' de house an' put er ladder up, an' one er dem niggers shin up it lak a squ'r'l, an' 'gin ter fling down silber an' silk dresses an' julery f'um whar dat nigger-trader nigger know dey was.

"Ez dey was flung down, dat sujjunt an' dem niggers put de things in bags twell dey soon had mos' a waggin load. Den de sujjunt say when de corp'al call on his lady fr'en' erwhile dey'll jes' drap a little fiah under de house, an' see de 'ristercrats get out. Den one er dem niggers say, 'I gwine drap a little fiah right now.'

"Now, I gotter go back a li'l' ter get ev'y-

thin' straight. You see, one er de sills w'ut de flo' in de big hall 'twix' de settin'-room an' de dinin'-room res' on, done rot out, an' Marster was er habin' his carpenter ter put in er new sill, so de flo' was tuk up an' we had ter go 'cross de openin' on er plank, an' dar was er lot er chips an' shavin's an' sich-like fell on de groun' un'er de hall, an' hope I may die ef one er dem niggers—dat yaller nigger w'ut Marster bo't, ain' fling some paper an' shavin's an' de like right un'er de hall, an' de fire riz in er hurry; but Hester grab a bucket er water an' fling it on de fiah, an' dat kinder squinch it er li'l'; but it keep er bu'nin', an' it look lak it gwine ter tek de house; but Hester an' Marster fling mo' water on it. Jes' den dat li'l' yaller nigger so'ger 'gin ter fa'ly dance an' say, 'Oh, you see I done come, an' yer fine young lady got ter git outen dar now, an' I gwine put my ahm 'roun' her,' an' he snap his finger in my face. Den, boss, I riz up. I was younger dan I is now, an' was er man 'mongst men—an' I jes' tap him a jolt on de p'int er de jaw an' he fall lak er beef; an' you know w'ut I done den?"

"I certainly have no idea," said Mr. Standwick.

"Well, sah, I jes' cotch him by de hin' laig an' flung him thu' de hall doah, w'ut open on de gall'ry inter dat fiah un'er de hall. He holler an' scratch an' scatter fiah lak cats er fightin', an' den dat udder yaller nigger come

er runnin' an' seed dat so'ger nigger rollin' out, an' he say, 'Who done dat?' an' 'fo' I kin answer Marster start outen de winder on ter de gall'ry, an' de cock-eyed scoun'el start to'rds Marster an' say, 'Ol' man, I glad you open de winders; I gwine step in an' see dem white wimmins w'ut so proud.'

"Boss, you orter seed Marster. He stretch er foot, an' his eyes flash, an' he start ter shoot, an' jes' den Ned tuk a han' in de 'formance. I ain' had no gun, but I had er ax, an' dat nigger never retch Marster, 'ca'se I tap him on de burr er de yeer wid de butt een' er de ax an' down he went; an' I tossed him over in de coals an' de cinders an' kindlin' whar his side-podner wen' fus'.

"'Member, boss, dat all dis time dat white sujjunt an' dem th'ee niggers was down 'hin' de house 'vidin' de plun'er, an' dey was 'lowin' dat cock-eyed yaller nigger a sheer. W'en dey heered de fiah poppin' an' seed de smoke an' seed Marster an' Hester fightin' de fiah, dat low-down sujjunt say, 'Let 'er bu'n; we got de stuff.' An' jes' den de s'prisin'es' thing dat ebber I has done see sence I was bo'n happen.

"Up de road I hear hosses er runnin', bookety-book, clipperty-clip, lipperty-lip, right to'rds dis house, an' fus' thing you know, er Feddul cap'n an' ten Feddul so'gers was er comin' lak der win'. De cap'n was in de lead, an' w'en he got tolerbul close I look at

him, an' I like ter drap, an' I holler, 'Good Gawd! Is Marse Arthur done tu'n Yankee?' Fur it sho' mus' be him, er his twin, er his ghos'.

"He rid right up ter de steps wid his men, an' w'en he see de fiah he call ter his mens, 'We mus' put out dat fiah!' an' he an' his mens jump right down an' stomp out de fiah an' scatter de trash an' bu'nin' planks, an' dey soon had de fiah put out.

"Den de cap'n say to Marster, 'Is yo' house been rob?' An' Marster say he don' know. Den I say, 'Yes, sah; de white sujjunt an' th'ee niggers done rob it, an' dey say dey gwine bu'n it. Er yaller nigger w'ut use' ter b'long ter Marster sot it erfiah in dar whar you jes' put it out.'

"Den de cap'n say, 'Cunnel Marshall, you an' de ladies an' yo' surbunts jes' stay in de house an' you'll be safe. I'll put a guard 'roun' it.' Den Marster thank de cap'n an' 'vite him ter one er de rooms in de wing er de house ter wash his han's, an' while he was gone, dat sujjunt came er bouncin' up de back steps an' open de back doah ob de hall an' holler, 'Who put out dat fiah?' De cap'n's newtenant was dar, an' he say, 'I an' my men put it out.' Den de sujjunt say, 'I had it sot erfiah, an' you ain' got nuttin' 't all ter do wid it. You don' b'long ter my com-man'. I al'ays set rebbul houses erfiah, an' you better do de same.'

" De newtenant say, ' I let you know I'm a gen'man, an' I don' bu'n houses er mek war on ladies an' old gen'mens.' Den de sujjunt say, ' I'm a gen'man too, an' I bu'ns 'em all.' Den de newtenant say slow an' plain, ' You is a damn guttersnipe an' 'senyeryary an' coward! An' I tell you now ef you set fiah to dis house hit'll be de las' house you ebber gwine set erfiah, an' de nex' fiah you an' dem niggers see will be hell-fiah! ' But de sujjunt man mus' sho'ly hab b'liebe de newtenant was er bluffin', 'ca'se I hope I may miss he'ben ef he an' dem niggers didn' go out dar an' stick fiah ter de hin' part er de house; but 'fo' dey do it de cap'n done come back an' his newtenant tol' him w'ut de sujjunt say, an' de cap'n tell de newtenant ter tek his men an' watch dat scoun'el.

" De newtenant tuk his men an' go 'roun' de back way, an' jes' den dat sujjunt an' dem niggers was settin' fiah ter de house, an' it was 'mencin' ter bu'n, an' den trubbel br'ek loose.

" Quicker 'n a sheep kin shake he tail, de guns went bang, bang, bang, bang! an', boss, sho's a hoss got a tail, dat sujjunt an' dem th'ee niggers was pile' up lak hogs 'roun' de hot water bar'l in hog-killin' time, an' de cap'n's men run an' put out de fiah.

" De cap'n run 'roun' dar w'en he heerd de shootin', an' w'en he see de sujjunt an' de niggers pile' up, an' see de fiah, he ain' ax

no queschun, but he say, 'Dey won' do no mo' robbin' er bu'nin'.'

"Den de white so'gers fin' all de silber an' julery an' han' it ter de cap'n, an' de cap'n tuk it, an' bow, an' say he proud to comman' gen'mans w'ut don' bu'n er steal; an' den he go in de house an' lif' his cap an' s'lute Marse ter an' ax him ter deliber de silber an' julery to Miss Ma'y wid his comp'ments. An' den a surpriziner thing happen dan de 'rival er de Feddul cap'n an' his mens.

"Jes' as der cap'n an' his men git back 'roun' ter de front er de house, an' on de gall'ry erg'in, all we-uns heerd mo' hosses runnin', bookety-book, clipperty-clip, lipperty-lip, comin' f'um de udder een' er de road, an' de Feddul cap'n grab dem big double-bar'l telerscope an' look down dat way ter see who 'twas comin'; an' quicker 'n er minnit I seed er cap'n in de lead, an' bless Gawd! who was it 'ceptin' Marse Arthur Stan'ick, de cap'n on de 'Fed'rit side.

"W'en de Feddul so'gers see dem w'ut was comin' was 'Fed'rit so'gers, dey grab dey guns an' pistils; but de Feddul cap'n tell 'em ter put 'em down, an' den w'en dey look at Marse Arthur sorter close, dey look at him, an' den at dey cap'n, an' den at Marse Arthur erg'in, an' ob all de s'prised an' 'plexed mens you ebber see, dey took de lead, an' dey fergit erbout de 'Fed'rit so'gers er foll'in' Marse Arthur.

"W'en Marse Arthur' men ride up an' see Feddul so'gers dey 'pear lak dey gwine ter shoot; but jes' den Marster say, 'Gen'mens, dis n'ut'al groun', I b'liebe dem his wu'ds."

"Yes," said Mr. Standwick, "the house of a mutual friend is neutral ground."

"W'ut I 'lowed was, dey gwine 'clar truce,' ez Marster say, er 'play quits,' ez I say, long ez dey be on Marster's groun'; an' Marse Arthur moshun ter his mens ter put dey guns an' pistils down.

"Marse Arthur jump off de hoss at de foot er de steps, an' he had on er Yankee obercoat, an' it look lak dey was two Yankee cap'ns; but he flung back his obercoat, an' I see his 'Fed'rit nuniform, an' I say, 'Howdy, Marse Arthur? 'For' Gawd, I b'liebe dis good Yankee cap'n is your own deah brudder.' An' den he stop an' look at de Yankee cap'n, an' dey stan' an' look an' look at one 'nudder, but ain' say na'y word, but dey eyes 'gin ter git wet, an' dey wink um fas'; den all ob a suddent dey flung dey ahms 'roun' one 'nudder, an' sich er cryin' an' er huggin', an' er huggin' an' er cryin', I nebber seed befo' sence I was bo'n; an' Marster he cry, an' dem fightin' so'gers cry, an' de Feddul an' de 'Fed'rit so'gers fergit dey be ennermies an' be fightin' ebb'ry day, an' dey flung up dey caps an' holler, an' laff an' sorter cry, an' sich er time I nebber see.

"Den Cap'n Chawles say, 'Cunnel Mar-

shall, I am a Feddul so'ger, but I hope I am a gen'man. You an' yo' family is safe; I will le'be a guard 'roun' yo' house.' Den Cap'n Arthur say, ' Cunnel, dis is my brudder; an' dough we be fightin' on diff'unt sides, he's a gen'man.' Den Marster say, ' So long ez you is in dis house, er in dis ya'd, you an' yo' mens mus' 'member dis is n'ut'al groun', an' atter dis, ef you brudders meet heah, it mus' be jes' lak you was un'er a flag er truce,' I b'liebe dem's de wu'ds he say."

" Yes," said Mr. Standwick, " that is most likely so. When soldiers meet under a flag of truce they are friendly and peaceful as if they had never fallen out."

" Well, dat's de way de two cap'ns meet seberal times atterwa'ds right on dis place. Atter de two cap'ns let one nudder loose, Cap'n Arthur ax Marster whar Miss Ma'y an' Miss Lucy was, an Marster say, ' Come heah, an' I show you,' an' Marster run de big winder up, an' Cap'n Arthur see Miss Ma'y, an' nex' ter her Miss Lucy, an' nex' ter her Miss Jean, an' den de las' was Hester; an' Cap'n Arthur jes' jump right in, an' 'fo' all de company, cotch up Miss Lucy an' kiss her twell she blush red mos' lak er strawb'ry, an' den he tek Miss Ma'y in his ahms, an' say thank Gawd, dey's all safe.

" An den de Feddul cap'n he come in an' 'proach sorter slow an' onsart'in-lak, ez ef he ain' sho' he be welcome; an' he lif' his hat

an' bow ve'y perlite, an' say he ve'y glad he hab de privilidge er perteckin' 'em, an' ob sabin' de house; an' den he offer his ahm ter Miss Jean; but she sorter draw back, 'ca'se she ain' nebber tetch de han' ob a Yankee so'ger; but Marster look at her sorter 'proach-ful-lak, and she r'aley wan' ter git her han' on dat ahm, an' she tuk it, an' Cap'n Arthur gib Miss Lucy his ahm, an' Miss Ma'y tek Marster's, an' dey all gin' ter march out to'rds de gall'ry, an' den I say, ' Bein's you gwine ter hab er persession, an' dar's ernudder lady in dar, I gwine jine in.' So I steps in an' bow lak de white folks, an' gibs Hester mah ahm, an' march out behin', steppin' high, an' ev'ybody buss' out laffin' ez we come. An' dat's de way de cap'n sabe de house."

"Well," said Mr. Standwick, "that was indeed a terrible time; but I am inclined to think those who lost their lives deserved their fate. I am curious to know two things: how the ladies stood seeing dead men around, and what was done with the bodies? "

"Well, you see, boss, dar was so many so'gers passin' an' so many big guns to be heerd, an' so much shootin' eroun' de neighborhood, dat in de 'citemen't ob de fiah de ladies ain' pay no tenshun ter de shootin' er de sujjunt an' de niggers, an' dey ain' nebber see de daid carcasses 't all, 'ca'se we put 'em on de flo' er de kerridge-house."

"There's another thing I want to ask be-

fore I forget it. What became of the two men you tossed in the fire?"

"Now, boss, I tell you fus' 'bout dem carcasses; but I gwine ax you, w'ut you reckon Marster done wid 'em?"

"Really," said Mr. Standwick, "I could hardly form an idea what a man would do under such extraordinary circumstances."

"Well, I tell you w'ut I'd er done ef it had b'en lef' ter me. I'd er tuk dem four carcasses an' put logs on 'em, an' er bu'nt de las' bone un 'em up, an' den I'd er tuk a club an' finish dem two yaller niggers, an' er flung dey carcasses on de same pile.

"I mout not do dat now ef it was all ter be done ober, but I sw'ar I would er done it den, 'ca'se I was sho' mad. But I tell you w'ut Marster done. He done w'ut na'y man but a Chrischun man would er done. He tuk dem niggers an' dat sujjunt, an' he tell his carpenter ter mek fo' coffins, an' fix all de carcasses decent-lak an' put 'em keerf'ly in de coffin an' haul ter de nigger grabeyard in his hack an' two-hoss waggins. An' hope I may see dem niggers erg'in ef Marster ain' stan' dar an' read ebber so much Scripter outen de 'Piskerpul pra'rbook, an' den he tol' his nigger preacher, who'd rudder preach dan ter eat, dat he mus' 'ten' ter de res' er de fun'al.

"Boss, dat nigger was sho' happy den, an' him an' de udder niggers had de gre'tes' time

you ebber heerd of. A nigger radder go to er fun'al 'an ter go fishin'. Dey al'ays hez er big time ef dey got jes' one ter put in de groun', an' w'en dey got fo' dey counts dat er juberlee. Ol' Ab'um, de preacher, he hilt 'em in pra'r er spell fer sho', an' you mout er heerd him two mile; an' den he preach twell mos' night, an' den all de niggers sung:

“‘Hark f'um de tomb a doneful soun’,
Mine years atten’ de cry.’

“Dey *boun'* fer ter sing dat chune at er nigger fun'al, 'ca'se er nigger don' b'liebe it's er fun'al 'tall 'ceptin' dey do; an' think de nigger ghos' gwine come back ef dey don' sing it.

“I stan' erwhile an' lis'en, an' I say ter mahse'f, 'It's all right fer Marster ter read pra'rs an' fer dat nigger ter pray twell he sweat, but 't ain't no use, 'ca'se dat bunch dey prayin' ober b'long to de Debbil, an' he gwine roas' 'em in hell lak I roas' er 'tater in de chimbley cornder.”

“Now, Ned, don't say that; you don't believe anybody is actually roasted in hell-fire sure enough?”

“Yes, sah; I do, boss; it's 'bleeged ter be so. Dar lakly ain't many er dat kin', but dey boun' ter be a hell fer sich a gang ez dem niggers was er puttin' in de groun'.

“W'ut you gwine ter do wid er lot er nig-

gers an' er wuss white man, w'ut try to bu'n Marster's house, an' 'sult my Mistiss, an Miss Lucy, an' Miss Jean, an' mos' skeer mah wife to def—de onlies' wife I ebber is had? Oh, dar's boun' ter be er hell fer dat sort; but I sorter hope dey git outen hell atter er while. I b'liebe de mussey er de Lawd hol' out even fer dem; but it gwine be strain' pow'ful.

"Now, ez ter dem two yaller niggers I flung in de fiah, lemme tell you somepin'. Dey orter wu'k fer Miss Ma'y long ez dey lib. I tell de Feddul cap'n 'bout 'em, an' he say he gwine sen' 'em ter de camp an' dey'll be 'ten ter ve'y quick; but dey was er moanin' an' er groanin', an' Miss Ma'y heerd 'em, an' stidder lettin' me tek Marster's pistil an' 'ten' ter 'em, w'ut mus' she do? Hope I may drap daid dis minnit, ef she ain' tek Hester an' fix some cotton battin' an' sweet ile an' lime watuh, an' dressed dem yaller whelps' ahms an' han's whar dey b'en bu'nt. Den she ax de cap'n dat he don' have 'em shot.

"I was jes' gwine ter ax him ter hab 'em bof shot soon he git outen sight er de house, but Miss Ma'y make me shame er mahse'f, she sich er Chrischun. I won'er huccome Gawd ain' tek Miss Ma'y ter heaven wid de res' er de anguls, 'ca'se she sho' is er angul on de yearth."

CHAPTER XII

AFTER he had finished his recital Ned asked to be excused so he could make another trip to see how "dem free niggers was wu'kin'," but before he left he saddled Redbird and hitched her to the rack, and said, "Boss, ef you lak ter tek er ride, I le'be dis snipshus little mar' fer you. I sho' you done fin' she's a saddle-nag fer true."

"Delightful! One of the finest I ever saw, and I shall enjoy another ride. My own horse will be so pampered and spoiled he will object to being ridden at all, I fear. You ought to have brought him out."

"Oh, no, sah; Marster always lets de vis'-ter's hoss res'. He's er gues' in de stable, lak you is in de big house."

"I am much obliged; certainly hospitality has reached its limit when it extends to the stranger's saddle-horse. These are great people you live with, Ned."

"Now you talkin', boss; dey's mah peepul an' I 'spec' ter lib an' die wid 'em. I 'spec' 'gin' you gits back f'um yer ride, Marster an' Miss Ma'y 'll be gittin' back f'um town."

Mr. Standwick rode a long distance in a different direction from that taken on previous

rides, and on every side he saw evidences of devastation, but saw also proof that the people were bravely struggling to rebuild their homes and restore their waste places.

The fields were white with cotton, a bountiful crop of corn had been gathered, and such orchards as had escaped destruction had borne heavy crops of fruit.

At many points where it was evident large residences had once stood, structures evidently meant to be temporary had been erected, and those who once lived in mansions were living in them.

Mr. Standwick met and conversed with men of evident education and culture who were working as common laborers, yet seemed cheerful and hopeful, and he returned to meet Colonel and Mrs. Marshall on their return from town, deeply impressed with what he had seen.

After supper was finished and they were seated in the sitting-room, Mr. Standwick said, "Ned has related to me some most interesting incidents to-day. He has a wonderful memory and deals with details with evident accuracy. And as you have told me, he was truthful. I was greatly impressed by his recital of the tragedy which followed your interview with Captain Alston, as told by him, and the tragic incidents which accompanied the attempt to burn the house were most dramatic."

"They were, indeed," said Colonel Marshall, with a smile, "and to me who was one of the actors, almost too dramatic; but really the meeting of two brothers, one an officer in the Federal and the other in the Confederate army, under such circumstances, especially considering the relations existing between them and two of the ladies present, was both dramatic and romantic, and full of noble sentiment. There were some facts which perhaps Ned did not fully explain to you, which give additional and profound interest to the events of that day."

"Mr. Standwick," said Mrs. Marshall, "if you and Colonel Marshall will excuse me I will retire. I am much fatigued and a recital of the events of that awful day is harrowing. I am glad to know that the day was lightened by the noble conduct of two gallant young soldiers; and though they were arrayed on opposing sides, and one was in the ranks of the North, we cherish tenderly the memories of both; and it may be that the fact that they bore your name, or so nearly the same name as yours, has added to the pleasure your stay as our guest has given us. I could wish you no higher honor than that you might have claimed them as kindred."

"I am sure," replied Mr. Standwick, "I should have been honored by such relationship; but unfortunately I have no sons, and have never had. It may have been that they

belonged to a branch of the family who have dropped the *d* from the name, and since I have thought more on the subject of their identity I am inclined to think I shall be able very soon to tell you who they were."

"It is only the name that reminds us of you. They bore no facial resemblance to you that is discernible. If it should prove that they were bound to you by the ties of blood, we shall be glad. Good night."

"Yes," continued Colonel Marshall, "they were gentlemen and heroes, and sealed their devotion to their convictions with their blood."

"Just here, Colonel, permit me to ask the question which I intimated I would ask when you told me of your visit to Captain Alston. Now after years have passed, and the passions of the hour have subsided, and the dead are dust, and the matter can be weighed calmly, what do you think of the action of Captain Alston?"

Without a moment's hesitation, Colonel Marshall replied, "He did exactly right; he could have done nothing else."

Mr. Standwick sat for a considerable time in silent thought, surprised and perplexed. He knew that the man who had so responded to his question was an educated, cultured, Christian gentleman; a peaceable, law-abiding citizen; a man who lived according to the loftiest ideals, and who was respected and be-

loved by all who knew him; yet he, with earnestness and unmistakable sincerity, had declared without qualification that his neighbor, likewise a gentleman of the highest personal character, did right in taking the life of his fellow-man, under circumstances which would, had the deed been committed where the guest lived, have been pronounced murder by law and public sentiment.

Colonel Marshall seemed to understand what was passing through the mind of his guest, and slowly repeated his reply, "He did exactly right; there was no other recourse for a gentleman. He acted in obedience to the impulse of honor and pride, and his act was demanded and justified by the 'unwritten law,' the only law applicable to the situation."

"It seems to me," said Mr. Standwick, "that he might not only have vindicated the character of his daughter, and proved the baseness of her traducer, but have punished him in a manner which would have made the punishment to him most severe; that is, financially, by bringing action against him for damages for slander. I am sure that remedy would have been invoked where I live."

"And I am sure," replied Colonel Marshall quickly, and with some warmth, "it was not invoked here; and so far as I know, has never been invoked in this State. The docket of no court in this State, or so far as I know, in any Southern State, has ever been defiled

by a suit for damages as a salve for wounded honor. No man who would bring an action to recover damages of the traducer or debaucher of his daughter, or for the alienation of his wife's affections, would ever again be recognized or socially tolerated. If I were at the bar I would drive from my office a man who would offer me such a case. I cannot contemplate or imagine Angus Alston resorting to such a course; but had he done so, I would never have spoken to him again or permitted him to cross my threshold."

"There is one fact," said Mr. Standwick, "which cannot be gainsaid or denied, and that is, the act of Captain Alston was a palpable violation of the law as set forth in the statutes."

"That," said Colonel Marshall, "is by no means certain, because the statutes do not attempt to set forth every combination of circumstances which justifies homicide. They only prescribe and define certain causes, which are merely illustrative and which serve to guide in determining other cases resting upon like principles of reason and justice; and by analyzing, it is not impossible to evolve justification for Alston's act out of the statutes themselves, and upon well recognized precedent. However, I shall not bore you by such an argument, because the cold letter of the written law has nothing to do with such a case."

"The protection of the honor of wife and daughter and the good name of an honorable family is a duty which no man can delegate, but must discharge himself. No statute has ever been drawn to meet such a case; the legal vernacular is not adequate to the framing of such a law.

"Human statutes have no application to that which involves the good name of a woman, or the honor of a wife or family, and over such a case no human tribunal has justly any jurisdiction. The 'unwritten law' only, to which every gentleman and man of honor should yield obedience, controls in such a case, and it is supreme here.

"Nowhere on earth are the home and the family so carefully guarded and shielded as they are in the South, and nowhere are the standards of womanly propriety and virtue so high; and whatever may be our faults, we are not grasping or sordid, and with us no 'jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that honor feels.'

"Brutus won deserved immortality by slaying Tarquin, the defiler of his wife. Virginius killed his lovely daughter to prevent her debauchment by a lecherous libertine. Angus Alston followed a noble example, you see.

"Here in our own country, a member of Congress, who has since won fame as a soldier, killed the trespasser upon his family honor, and a jury of his peers with their hands

on their hearts declared him not guilty. In that case one of the great lawyers of America defended and vindicated the application of the 'unwritten law,' upon sound legal principle and precedent in a most masterful speech; but we have even higher authority and precedent.

"I am no theologian or exegete, nor do I claim either skill or accuracy in scriptural interpretation, but when Shechem, the son of Hamor, the Hivite, defiled Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, the brothers turned deaf ears to every proposition of marriage and of compromise or commercial compensation or satisfaction. With their good swords they avenged the dishonor of their sister, and when their old father reproached them for their haste and pointed out to them how they had put him and all his people in peril, their reply, in substance, was, 'Well, suppose that is true, and they do slay us and despoil us of our possessions and wipe out our tribe; yet should the prince of the land deal with our sister as with an harlot?'" This was their only reply; they had slain the defiler and were ready to accept the consequences. And I find that same Jacob, the father of the sons who slew the debaucher of their sister, in that royal line wherein was David, from whom descended the Son of God.

"No, Mr. Standwick, there was no other recourse. Whether my interpretation of the

Scripture be correct or not, there were many illustrious precedents for the act of Angus Alston. You, of course, can take the cold, literal statute and condemn him; but the letter killeth while the spirit giveth life, and the spirit of the law, as it is interpreted instinctively by honorable men who cherish those feelings of pride which are inseparable from the character of every gentleman, not only justifies, but commends his action. The slanderer of a pure and innocent woman is a foe to universal womanhood and to organized society, and to slay him is as justifiable as is the slaying of a rabid dog.

" But to return to our story about the Stanwick brothers. Arthur Stanwick, directly after his graduation, came South, and responded to my advertisement for a tutor for my children. When he came to my house he seemed so youthful, and really he was only a few years the senior of my eldest, I hesitated to engage him; but his good manners and his manifestly thorough education led me to accept him and I afterward rejoiced that I did. His services proved eminently satisfactory, and the Massachusetts Yankee, as we laughingly called him,—he said he was from Massachusetts,—became rapidly southernized.

" He intimated rather than directly said, that his father was greatly prejudiced against the South, and southern people, and was especially extreme in his views concerning the

condition of the negro, not only in relation to his being held in slavery, but to the denial to him of equality upon his merits, regardless of his color; and Arthur frequently remarked that he felt sure that if his father could live awhile in the South, as he had done, his views would be revolutionized.

"Never once did he manifest the slightest inclination to recognize or treat the negro as a social equal; indeed, he became as intense in his opposition to that impossible condition as were and are we natives to the manner born, but he was invariably kind and considerate in his treatment of them; and Ned and Hester and Dinah, the cook, and indeed every negro who came in contact with him, were devoted to him.

"I concluded from the general tone and tenor of his conversation that his father strongly objected to his coming South, but that he insisted, assigning as a reason that it was necessary to seek a milder and more genial climate; and I inferred that his action somewhat estranged his father, though the son never referred to him but in terms of deep affection and profound respect.

"He read law while he lived with us, and something like two years before the State seceded, was admitted to the bar and moved to the county-seat and opened his office, but always referred to this as his 'home.'

"He was a young man of engaging man-

ners, and of exceptionally brilliant intellect, and was endowed with that 'divine afflatus' which is as distinctly the gift of the orator as of the poet, and was a most eloquent and persuasive speaker, speaking with that fervor and fire which seems to be specially characteristic of southern speakers. Unlike most young lawyers, he served no apprenticeship, went through no 'starvation period,' but stepped in a few months to a high position at the bar.

"When Mr. Lincoln issued his first call for troops, Arthur came out here at once, and as soon as the usual greeting was over, he said, 'Colonel, the die is cast. War is inevitable between the North and South, and I must go.' I inferred from the tone in which he spoke that he meant that he was going back to the North, and said, 'Well, Arthur,'—for so he insisted from the first I should call him,—'I cannot blame you. You were born in the North and reared to manhood there, amid environment and influences and under training in political thought, the effects of which a few years' residence in the South cannot be expected to overcome. So when you leave, you will carry with you our respect, affection, and best wishes.'

"I shall never forget the expression on his face when I had finished speaking. 'Why, Colonel, you astound me! Do you really misunderstand me? This has been for five

years my home, and is, I feel, yet, my home, and the South is my adopted land. I have studied the Constitution and the history of its formation, and the question of the rights of the States, and I believe as strongly as you do in the rights of the Southern States to withdraw from the Union, and I know it is the duty of her people to resist invasion, and I am going to stand with them. A cavalry company has been organized in town, and I am proud to say I have been elected captain and have accepted'; and he drew himself to his full height, looking every inch the gentleman that he was, and the soldier he proved to be.

"I took the young fellow in my arms, and said, 'God bless you, Arthur!' and I suspect a tear dropped on his raven locks.

"He then said, 'Colonel, you know the relations existing between Miss Lucy and myself. I have loved her from the time I knew her first, and have made no secret of my affection; but I cannot ask her to be my wife until the war is over. But if I survive it and bear myself as becomes a southern soldier, and she remains of the same mind, you will, I trust, not withhold your consent to our marriage.'

"'I will not, my boy,' I said, 'and God grant you may return as victor, and a general, and in all the vigor of your splendid manhood.'

"'I thank you sincerely, Colonel; and you do not know how happy I feel that there is

no conflict between my love and my conviction of duty. I would freely give my life for your daughter were it necessary, yet if I felt constrained by conscientious convictions to espouse the Union cause, I should do so, even at the price of the loss of her love and her.

“‘ That you would do so, Arthur, I firmly believe,’ I said, ‘ and the fact of my belief in the integrity of your purpose and the unselfishness of your action, but increases my respect and affection for you.’

“ He sat in silence for some time, and then said, slowly and with evident feeling, ‘ Colonel, you know I have a twin brother in the North. He opposed my coming South and would then not himself leave father, though he has since gone to the Northwest to make his home. Though we have long been separated, my affection for him has never abated, and it was my purpose to soon visit him and my father. He is high spirited, sympathizes strongly with the views of our father, and being a young man of pronounced convictions, I have but little doubt that he will enlist on the northern side, and possibly we may meet in battle. If we should, I trust Heaven will so shape events that we will not be brought into personal conflict, for I had far rather be killed than to kill my brother.’

“ He proved the soldier I expected him to be. He had an independent command and was bold and daring, yet tactful and discreet,

and his men idolized him and followed his leadership with unquestioning devotion, and when he and his brother met on the gallery of this house and stood linked in each other's arms and sobbing like children, Federal and Confederate soldiers alike lifted their hats and shouted, while tears coursed down their rugged cheeks, cheeks that had never blanched with fear amid the deadliest fighting.

"Shortly after that, Captain Charles intercepted another squad of marauding negroes bent on burning this house. Only their protestations of innocence, which were all lies, saved them from the fate which the four met on the previous occasion. After he had driven the villains away under threat of instant death, he entered the house, and assured the ladies—I chanced to be absent—that he would send a guard at once if they desired him to do so.

"Dinner had just been announced and Mrs. Marshall invited him to dine. He frankly said, 'Mrs. Marshall, I know a Federal soldier has never been seated at your table, and I fear you have felt constrained to invite me by reason of the peculiar circumstances under which we meet, and I cannot take advantage of the position in which I find myself. I know that not a few wearing this uniform, which in my eyes is the badge of honor, have forced themselves rudely to the tables of many of your neighbors, but before

I would do so I would starve. I am deeply grateful for your courtesy, but trust you will excuse me.'

"'Captain Stanwick,' Mrs. Marshall replied, 'no circumstances can justify a violation of the customs and traditions of generations. I invite you to become my guest in obedience both to the imperative obligations of hospitality and of gratitude, and furthermore, for the sake of your brother.' The young man yielded, and for the first time a Federal soldier in Federal uniform sat at my table with my wife and daughter, and the daughter of my friend, Captain Alston.

"Thrice had he come to the rescue of my daughter and Miss Alston, and had saved my house from burning, and my wife and daughter and their friend from God only knows what horrible fate; and had I been at home I should have been proud to welcome him to my house, because he was a brave, chivalrous gentleman, who neither burnt houses nor permitted them to be burnt, nor waged war on non-combatants.

"I do not believe there was ever any engagement in the full sense of the term between Captain Charles Stanwick and Miss Alston,—or Jean, as I called her,—nor, indeed, do I know in fact that she ever acknowledged or confessed for him other feeling than that of admiration and gratitude; but that she loved him with all the fervor of her affectionate,

frank, honest nature, I think there is no doubt.

"You understand, Mr. Stanwick, that the prejudice against Federal soldiers was most intense on the part of the women of the South. They seemed to resent the cruelty and injustice of the invasion and devastation even more bitterly than the men, because in fact they were, and are, the greatest and most direct sufferers by reason of the war, and it would have taken a young woman of extraordinary moral courage to confess her love, or admit she had plighted her vows to a Federal soldier; yet that her heart's promptings were in that direction, I think is certain.

"Love recognizes no barriers. It laughs at geographical and political lines. It takes no heed of fightings, and as amazing as it may sound to you, and it certainly astounded us, the chivalry and courage and consideration and knightly bearing of Charles Stanwick commanded the admiration and compelled the love of the daughter of as gallant and devoted a Confederate captain as ever flashed a sword.

"I do not believe she ever admitted to her father the feeling she had for Captain Stanwick, but the son of the Puritan won the heart of the daughter of the Cavalier.

"Arthur bore himself as I knew he would; but most fortunately, he and his brother never met in battle until after they met here, nor, as

I learned, did either know positively that the other was in the army until they met here under the extraordinary conditions of which you have heard.

"That day, by mutual consent, and moved by the common and noble purpose to prevent robbery, arson, and God only knows what other fearful outrage, truce was for the time being declared, and several times later the two brothers met at this house or came separately, always coming unaccompanied; and by mutual consent, this was neutral ground.

"The last time I saw the two brothers it was under totally different and most distressing circumstances. I heard of a sharp and bloody engagement some distance south of this, between the advance guard of the advancing army and the rear guard of the retreating army, and we heard that Arthur's command was engaged. Taking my ambulance or hack, equipped with bandages, mattresses and food, Ned and I drove to the scene of the battle. When I reached the field, the men of the two companies, under a flag of truce, were burying the dead and caring for the wounded. I hoped both of the young captains had escaped unharmed and that my search would prove it so, but I sent Ned along the line of the Federal wounded, while I went where most of the fallen ones appeared to be our men.

"I had not proceeded far before I recog-

nized the voice of Arthur calling me as I passed near him. He was resting against a tree, desperately wounded, and the pallor of death was on his face. As I bent over him, he said, 'Colonel, I have not long to live. Where I am was the front of the fighting. Tell Lucy I loved her to the last, and believe we will meet again where we shall never part. Tell her the thought of her lingered last on my mind and her picture rests over my heart. Now, Colonel, I believe my brother led a company on the other side. Each of us was on the right of his command and did not meet directly, but I feel sure I saw him a long distance away before the fighting was hottest. You will do your dying friend, your almost son, a favor if you will find him, if he is alive, and bring him to me, or carry me to where he is."

"I said I would find him, and I started, but met Ned almost immediately. Ned said that he had found Captain Charles badly wounded, and he wanted to see his brother, and that he had made the identical request of Ned that Arthur made of me. I directed Ned to hurry up the ambulance, and Arthur said, 'Carry me to him; I will live till I see him.' We laid him tenderly in the ambulance and drove to where his brother was lying. He said, 'Take me out and lay me beside him.' We did so. The pale faces of both lighted with a faint smile, and as we laid Arthur

close by his brother, he placed one of his hands in that of Charles's, and motioned me to lift his brother's head that he might put his arm around his neck.

“‘Colonel Marshall,’ said Charles, ‘we will not be here long. I did my duty as I saw it. Please tell her, you know who, that I loved her till death came, and the thought that she loved me dwelt last in my memory and lighted my pathway to the grave.’

“‘Tell Lucy,’ said Arthur, ‘that in the bloodiest fighting my thoughts were upon her, and that her picture stained with the life-blood that I gave for her and the South will be buried with me.’

“‘Good-by, Colonel; good-by, Ned,’ said Charles. ‘It is growing dark. Lie closer, brother,’ and Arthur pressed his cheek against that of his brother, and both looked upward to the blue sky which arched that field of blood, and then looked at me, and I knelt there by the side of the two dying heroes and lifted my voice in prayer for their parting souls, and as I ceased to pray a quiver passed through the frames of both, their eyelids dropped, and two more knightly spirits passed up to God.

“I brought them both home and placed them in the same coffin in my parlor, and with the solemn and impressive ceremonies of the church, we laid them to rest in my family burying-ground, close by where my sons and

Tom sleep. You can almost see the spot from this end window by the glorious light of this autumn moon."

Mr. Standwick stepped to the window and stood in silence for several minutes looking out toward the resting-place of the victims of fratricidal war, and Colonel Marshall, seeing that his guest was deeply moved, suggested that it was perhaps time to retire. Mr. Standwick bowed his assent and bade his host good night.

CHAPTER XIII

THE next morning was Sunday, and Mr. Standwick expressed the intention of leaving, but Colonel Marshall objected.

"No, you must not go to-day. Ned will tell you that if you do you are bound to have bad luck; then we want you to drive with us to town to attend church and see and hear the saintly man of God from whose hands the two young captains, whom I cannot but feel must have been in some way related to you, took their last communion. If you do not go with us, you will deprive Ned of the inexpressible pleasure of driving you with his mistress and myself to church, he occupying the driver's seat in his Sunday rig, with Hester at his side."

"Well, Colonel, that is a combination of temptations I cannot resist. To see the venerable rector I feel were almost a duty, and to disappoint Ned would be unpardonable."

Colonel Marshall directed Ned and Hester to get ready in their Sunday clothes, and told Ned to bring the carriage to the door and drive his mistress, Mr. Standwick and himself to town, telling Hester she could, if she wished, ride on the elevated driver's seat

with Ned, a privilege to which she was accustomed and of which she was very proud.

Ned was overjoyed at the directions given him. "I much obleeged, boss, dat you gwine stay ober Sunday, an' dat I git ter drive you ter town wid Marster an' Miss Ma'y. You gwine ter see a gent'man's nigger an' a nigger gent'man drive his Marster's kerridge to-day, an' his wife on de driver's seat wid him, an' you ain' gwine see him notice a'y common nigger 'twix' heah an' town an' back."

In about an hour the carriage appeared, drawn by two large, beautifully formed mahogany bays that stood champing their bits and impatiently pawing the gravel in the carriageway.

The carriage, in shape and style, belonged to the "before the war" period. The driver's seat was high, the body of the vehicle capacious, the rear springs wide and almost circular, the axles and running-gear strong, but it had been painted and trimmed recently, and was not only impressive in appearance, but there was about it a most becoming stateliness and dignity.

The colorings of the carriage and the trappings of the horses were brilliant and tasteful, and Hester, with a black silk dress and white embroidered collar, a pair of white gloves and a bonnet of generous proportions and somewhat out of style, made a picture in keeping with the surroundings.

No lady could have borne herself with more dignity, or an air of more perfect satisfaction with her toilet and her environment; but horses, carriages, and Hester all "paled their ineffectual fires" before Ned.

He was arrayed in his "bro'dclof" suit. His three-story hat towered far above his white locks; his boots were polished to mirror-like perfection, and his "blue silk neck hank'-cher" spread out in generous expanse over the lapels of his vest and his shirt front. No monarch ever held his scepter, emblem of his royalty, more proudly than Ned carried his carriage whip, and no courtier could have borne himself with more dignity.

As Colonel and Mrs. Marshall and their guest approached the carriage, he bowed low and lifted his "three-story hat," then let down the steps of the carriage and touched one arm of his mistress, while her husband held the other. After she had been seated, Colonel Marshall bade his guest enter the carriage. As Mr. Standwick seated himself by the side of Mrs. Marshall, Ned bowed, and when Colonel Marshall stepped into the carriage, he transferred his hat to his whip hand and closed the door with a profound obeisance.

After hosts and guest were seated, Ned turned to Hester and bowed and said, "Now, Missiz Hester Marshall, I'll 'sist you up ter de driver's seat, an' yer husban' gwine git up dar 'long side er you, an' den dis heah kerridge

gwine ter p'amberlate to'rds town lak a streak."

Hester was soon seated on the left-hand side of the elevated driver's seat, and Ned sprang up by her side with wonderful agility, considering his age. Gathering up the lines taut and grasping the whip, he said to the stable boy who stood holding the bits, "Tu'n 'em erloose. Dey gwine ter go now lak er shot outen er shovel," and the noble animals made good the forceful illustration.

It was a lovely Sunday morning. A brighter, fairer one never dawned. A bluer sky never arched the earth, nor more glorious sunshine ever flooded it with dazzling radiance.

If all the forces and elements of Nature had conspired to create a day of brightness and beauty, of which every breath was a tonic draught and when the hearts of men responded to Nature's wooings, they could not have made a day of rarer loveliness. The air was crisp and cool, and the rays of the sun falling out of a cloudless sky tempered the breath of the north wind, which blew softly in gentle warning that winter was coming again to assume dominion; and the lungs eagerly drew in the life-giving draughts which came with cheer and thrill and healing on their wings.

A day so fair, so full of beauty, uplifted the souls of men, stirred their hearts with

gratitude and reverence, and drew them as by one impulse to the house of God, and Colonel and Mrs. Marshall and their guest looked forward with pleasure to the service in which they were soon to take part.

With such horses and upon such a morning, the drive to town was short, but every moment was a delight to Ned. He looked neither to the right nor the left, and faithfully kept his pledge not to notice "a'y common nigger"; but he bowed politely to every white person he knew among those he saw as he drew near the town.

Everybody seemed to know Colonel and Mrs. Marshall, and that they were admired and respected by all who knew them was most evident. Mr. Standwick noticed with pleasure that both spoke courteously and in the kindest tone to every negro who spoke to them, and as the speed of the team was lowered in going up a long, gradually sloping hill, Colonel Marshall observed a very old negro walking slowly and with apparent difficulty in the footpath which ran beside the main road, and he ordered Ned to stop, and got out of the carriage.

When the old negro saw him, a smile lighted his wrinkled face, and he removed his dilapidated hat and bowed low, scraping his foot back as he did so, and saying, "Good mawnin', Marse Cunnel; de top er de mawnin' ter yo'. Yo' sho' is lookin' fine. How is

de Mistiss? She is de purties' white lady, tubbe sho'."

"I thank you," said the Colonel; "she is very well. How are you?"

"Only tolerbul, Marse Cunnel. I b'en po'ly all de fall."

"You must ride the rest of the way," Colonel Marshall said. "Get up here on this good broad seat between the springs."

The old negro had difficulty in reaching the seat, but Colonel Marshall assisted him and saw him safely located, and then re-entered the carriage and directed Ned to drive on.

Ned was opposed to taking the wayfarer lest it detract from the glory of his entrance into the town, but he said nothing, except in an undertone to Hester, "Now, don' dat beat you? Marster stop de fines' kerridge an' de fines' hosses an' de fines' dress' nigger in dis country ter pick up a common co'n-fiel' nigger an' gib him er ride? Dat jes' lak him. Ef it wa'n't fer him, 'bout half de niggers in dis county would starbe ter def; but dis is chu'ch day, an' de Good Book say dat yer mus' look atter de poh, so I ain't say nuttin'."

"I'se willin' ter haul de old feller ter town, 'ca'se he b'en a fait'ful ole serbunt to some-body an' he gittin' to'rds de een' er his days. I glad Marster pick up de ole nigger w'ile de norden gent'man be ridin' wid him, 'ca'se it gwine show him dat a quality-gent'man is kin'

an' good ter white an' black all de same. Ef Marster didn' be quality-gent'man, he wouldn' pay no mo' 'tenshun ter dat ole nigger dan he would ter er terrypin er crawlin' 'long dat road.

"De quality ob peepuls is sho'ly in dey h'arts. Dey acts diff'unt f'um de scrubs. It seem' lak dey jes' nachu'lly knows how ter do de right thing, an' jes' 'bleeged fer ter do it."

By the time Ned had finished his estimate of his "Marster," and his reflections on the incident, the carriage drew up at the gate of the residence of Hamilton Marshall, Jr., who with his wife was at the gate ready to greet their guests. After most affectionate greeting to their parents, both the younger Marshall and his wife gave Mr. Standwick a gracious and cordial welcome, and he was impressed by the striking resemblance between the father and son.

The younger man was stalwart and erect, and his eyes had the same frank and kindly expression that made his father's face so attractive. The empty left sleeve bore silent testimony to the fact that he had stood in that long, thin, gray line of warriors whose deeds challenged the admiration of mankind, and had been an actor in that mighty drama which with a continent for a stage and a world for an audience for four years enchain'd the attention of civilized humanity, and Mr. Standwick could not for a moment doubt

the integrity of conviction and action of the magnificent specimen of manhood who had, with such evident sincerity, welcomed the Puritan stranger to his home, and who bore upon every lineament of his countenance the indefinable stamp which God and Nature puts upon the gentleman.

After the greetings were over between the parents and their guest and their hosts to be during the day, Colonel Marshall said, "My son, Annie and you must not forget Hester and Ned."

"No danger, father," said the son, "that we will do that," and both he and his wife greeted "Mammy" and "Uncle Ned," and shook hands with them and inquired after their health.

Both replied that they were "tolerbul, thankee, young Marster," and Ned eagerly asked, "How is little young Marster w'ut b'en so sick? We is pow'ful oneasy 'bout him."

"Oh, he is all right now. You see him yonder on the gallery able to be up, and clapping his hands in delight." Colonel and Mrs. Marshall had lingered as if to give their guest the opportunity to witness the meeting between the old negro and their "young Marster."

Perhaps without a conscious purpose, Ned gave the northern guest full opportunity to understand conditions and relations as they

were, for when he saw Hamilton Marshall, the third, he said, "Dat's er fack, yon'er he is, tubbe sho'," and lifting his hat and bowing, said, "Marster, de li'l' young Marster 'minds me er Marse Hamilton when he was er chap. He sho' was er buster."

At this point Hester took part in the conversation. "Time do sho'ly go er scootin'. It 'pears lak on'y jes' de udder day w'en Marse Hamilton was Miss Ma'y' baby an' my baby. He sho' was de fines' boy dis kentry ebber seed up ter dat time. We done watch him grow up an' seed him w'en he was er settin' up ter de young gals, an' was gay an' lif' his foot cl'ar lak a co'tin' man; an' now he bigger 'an Marster, an' done got er wife an' er li'l' Hamilton er his own, an' b'en ter de wah an' los' his ahm, an' I kin ska'sely b'liebe it all."

"I mighty glad," said Ned, "little young Marster done got well, 'ca'se he very 'portant young man. He got ter keep de Marshall name er gwine, an' it's er gran' name fer sho'. It's er quality-name, an' quality-folks w'ars it, an' he jes' keep up de fambly *reecord*, he be all right. He got de blood an' de breedin', an' dey gwine tell jes' same ez dey do in hosses. Mr. Stan'ick, I glad you see all mah white folks, an' glad you gwine ter be in mah young Marster's house, an' glad you rid behin' dese two thurrerbreds I got hol' ob right now."

"Thank you, Ned," said Mr. Standwick. "I am just as glad as you are, and I am greatly pleased to have the privilege of being just where I am, for I am learning much."

As the party moved off toward the house, Colonel Marshall said, "Ned, you can put the horses in the stable; we will walk to church."

"Marster," said Ned, "is you got any 'jection to mah drivin' 'roun' de cote-house squar', so dese town peepuls kin see de kerridge an' dese thurrerbred hosses?"

"Oh, no," replied Colonel Marshall, "if it will give you any pleasure."

"Thankee, Marster. Now dese peepuls gwine see de fines' kerridge an' pa'r er hosses dat ebber mek tracks in dis town," and Ned drove in state around the town. He bowed profoundly to every "quality-gent'man," but utterly ignored every negro. One elderly one got almost in the way of the wheels and called, "Howdy, Ned?" but Ned's only reply was, "G'long, nigger; don' bodder me. Don' you see um drivin' Marster's kerridge, an' I ain't got no time ter fool 'long er de likes er you."

As they proceeded toward the house, Colonel Marshall said laughingly, "You see, Mr. Standwick, whatever the rest of the world may say of the clan Marshall, it is certain to have two champions as long as Ned and Hester live; but I fear they are

hardly impartial enough to give their opinions much value. There is no doubt, though, of their sincerity, nor of their love for my son. They nursed him and rocked him in his cradle, and often when he was a baby kept him all night, and their pride in him was and is intense."

"Colonel," returned Mr. Standwick, "the unmistakably sincere devotion of your negro servants to you and your wife and your son and to the memories of your dead children, is to me as beautiful as it is surprising. I know of no feature of social and domestic life here that is so remarkable to me. I would not have believed it had I not seen it."

As they entered the house, Hester said: "Miss Annie, is you got er cook ter-day? De las' Sunday we was heah, one er dese mizzerbul new free niggers done quit yer col' bedout any notice 'tall, an' yer would er had ter do de cookin' ef I hadn't come."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Marshall, Jr., "I have a kind of a cook; not one like you or Dinah."

"Dat's de truff, Miss Annie, sho' ez you bo'n. Cooks lak me an' Dinah is ska'se; an' bein' 's you ain't got er sho'-'nuff cook, I gwine in an' tek er han', 'fo' I go ter chu'ch." And Hester at once assumed charge of the kitchen, first informing the regular cook, "My white folks got a nordern gen'man fer comp'ny, an' dey wants a scrumpshus dinner." And she

proceeded to arrange for a dinner that would fulfill that description.

The party walked to church, Ned and Hester bringing up the rear, and after their "white folks" had been seated, they entered and took the rear pew on the right, in which they had often sat.

The venerable rector took for his theme one of that octave of beatitudes wherewith the Man of Galilee began the memorable discourse to his disciples and the multitude on the mountain side—"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." His sermon was an earnest, heartfelt, and appropriate plea for peace between the two sections, for forgiveness of injuries, for blotting out of bitter memories, and for restoration of brotherly feeling between those who so recently met in deadly combat, and for building up and welding in indissoluble bonds of patriotism the two sections of a common country; and Mr. Standwick afterward expressed to Colonel Marshall his appreciation of the spirit and text of the discourse.

The communion service followed the sermon, and after all the white communicants had partaken, Mr. Standwick could scarcely conceal his astonishment when he saw Ned and Hester approach and kneel at the chancel rail where a few moments before he and their master and mistress had knelt, and saw them

take the symbol of the eucharist from the same hands from which those who preceded them had received it.

When the services were ended and the worshipers had been dismissed, following the custom which yet prevails in many churches, the members of the congregation lingered and exchanged greetings and salutations, and Colonel Marshall and his wife presented their guest to many of their acquaintances and friends. His presence as a guest in the Marshall home had become known, and there was a general desire to meet him, especially as his political convictions and his views relative to slavery and the war had been much discussed.

Since the close of the war the number of those coming from that section wherein Mr. Standwick lived who were worthy to receive or did receive social recognition at the hands of the ladies and gentlemen of that or any other similar community was very small, and Colonel Marshall was desirous that his guest should see that he would be received and treated according to his merits, regardless of the place of his nativity or his political opinions.

Mr. Standwick found this true, for that he was a gentleman was always apparent, and he was received with the utmost cordiality, and the wish was expressed by a number that he would prolong his stay so they might have

the pleasure of having him as their guest. He was struck with the ease of manner and good breeding and familiarity with social usages and requirements of all those whom he met.

He was, too, specially impressed by the courteous and cordial greeting extended by Colonel and Mrs. Marshall to all whom they met. There was an unaffected sincerity in their manner, and it seemed as if Mrs. Marshall especially sought out those who by reason of their plainness of dress, or their poverty, or other causes, kept in the background, and to each and all she gave a hearty, cheery greeting; and it was evident that she was not only respected, but greatly beloved.

As the party were returning home, Mr. Standwick said, "Surely no stranger ever received a more kindly welcome or met those who were more evidently ladies and gentlemen. I am able to testify that in at least one place in the South, social distinctions do not rest on a financial basis. I am sure many whom I met to-day were by no means rich, and indeed must be in a money sense poor, yet they bear the outward and visible sign of that inward and nobler nature which is the possession of only gentlemen and gentlewomen; and I am sure you and Mrs. Marshall did not pay the slightest attention to the financial standing of those presented to me."

"Indeed, we did not," said Colonel Mar-

shall, "and you met those to-day as our friends who, impoverished by the war, are dependent upon their daily labor to earn a livelihood, and too often a precarious one, yet who in point of culture and character and accomplishments would be at ease in a queen's drawing-room. They were not very rich before the war; they are poor now; but they were then, as they are now, ladies and gentlemen by instinct, inheritance, and association."

"Something new, Colonel Marshall, is revealed to me every day, and the most surprising thing I have yet seen was the approach of Ned and Hester to the communion altar; and you will pardon me for saying that I could not help but wonder if it was usual for them to do so, or were they permitted to come because a stranger from the North was present."

"Why," said Colonel Marshall, "that was not thought of; though I am glad that their participation and your presence were coincident. They have done the same thing hundreds of times. Religion with the average negro is a mixture of ignorance, superstition, fanatical excitement, and emotion, which has absolutely nothing to do with his daily life, and which in nowise moves upon his moral nature, and Ned and Hester will have nothing to do with negro churches.

"They were baptized and confirmed as

Episcopalian, and while they cannot read, they know the creed and the Lord's prayer, and follow the service with wonderful accuracy and interest, and they always partake of the communion.

"By their lives and characters they set examples that even the best of whites may well imitate, and they are worthy to bow at the shrine where the exalted and the humble meet in the democracy of a common faith and the consciousness of a common weakness and dependence."

Mr. Standwick found in the house of the younger Marshall the same gracious hospitality which had been extended him in the house of the elder; a hospitality free from ostentation, but full of gentleness and delightful cordiality.

After dinner Ned came to inquire at what hour his master desired to start home, and was instructed to have the carriage at the door at four o'clock, until which time he and Hester were at liberty to go where they wished.

"We don' keer nuttin' 'bout gwine no-whars, thankee, Marster. Dar ain't no niggers in dis town dat Hester an' me 'soshates wid. Ef you please, we'd rudder set here on de steps an' heah our white folks talk."

"All right," said the younger Marshall, "you can tell Mr. Standwick something about the Reconstruction times. He says you have told him some remarkable stories."

"I ain't tol' him na'y thing w'ut ain't so, sho' ez you bo'n, young Marster; an' ef I was ter tell him all de devilment an' c'rups'hun dem carpetbaggers an' scalerwags done in dis kentry, 't would tek me all er nex' week; but I kin tell him 'bout de jestis er de peace what fotch on so much trubble an' mixin' up, wid de 'vorcements he gib niggers promisk'us 'roun' heah."

"Good," said Mr. Standwick, "I shall be delighted to hear it."

"It may add interest to the recital, Mr. Standwick," said Colonel Marshall, "to know that it is true, absurd as it sounds to hear it; but it is in keeping with what we have endured here for weary, wearing, horrible years."

"You see," said Ned, "de carpetbag Gubner 'p'nted dat nigger jestis er de peace, an' at de same time he 'p'nted er low-down carpetbagger clu'k er de county cote, an' de clu'k had ter sell de lisunce ter folks w'ut wants ter mah'y. Li'l' while atter dat, de carpetbag legislatur' done mek a law dat all de niggers w'ut was libin' tergedder ez man an' wife at a suttin time shell be count ez ef dey b'en mah'y reg'lar lak white folks.

"Lots er dem niggers ain't lak dat 'tall, 'ca'se dey ain't lak no kin' er law w'ut gwine keep 'em f'um changin' dey wifes w'en dey got tyud un 'em; so dey 'gin ter sku'mish 'roun' how ter git loose. You see, Mr. Stan'-

ick, dey don' know nuttin' 'bout dis 'vorcen-
ment bus'ness—it's new in dese parts.

"I nebber heerd er but one er two 'vorces
in all mah life 'fo' de war 'mongst white
folks, an' when peepul spoked 'bout dem dey
done it in er whisper; but dat clu'k an' dat
jestis sot 'vo'ces ergwine de quickes'.

"De clu'k tol' de fool niggers dey could
go ter cote an' git er 'vo'ce, an' den mah'y
er new wife, an' de niggers ain't had no bet-
ter sense dan ter go ter de jestis' cote, an' de
jestis an' de clu'k done fix up a scheme sich
ez I bet you ain't nebber heerd ob.

"He know mos' ebber' nigger b'liebes in
'hoodoo' and 'voodoo' an' sich, so de clu'k
tol' de niggers w'ut want to git 'vo'cement
papers dat de sperits gwine er put er cha'm
some'r's 'bout de cabin er in de yard ob ebber'
nigger w'ut de law 'low ter git 'vo'ce. Den
he, unbeknownst ter de niggers, got er big lot
er glass stoppers, an' red flannin, an' ha'r out
en hoss tails, an' wrop de stoppers in de flan-
nin' an' tie de hoss ha'r 'roun' 'em; an' den he
got er slick young yaller nigger depperty clu'k
w'ut come heah wid him w'en he fus' come
down dis way wid his carpetbag, ter put de
cha'ms in de cracks er de niggers' cabins, an'
in dey yard or under dey steps, an' den de
clu'k tell de niggers he will sen' his depperty
ter see ef de sperits sont any cha'm, an' ob
co'se de depperty kin fin' de cha'm quick, an'
den de nigger go an' tek it ter de jestis ob de

peace an' ax kin he gib folks 'vo'cement pa-pers.

"De jestis r'ar back an' say, 'Co'se I kin. Ef I kin mah'y folks, don' it stan' ter reason dat I kin onmah'y um? W'ut I jine I kin un-jine, cain't I?'

"Den de nigger say, 'How much does you chawge fer 'vo'cement papers?' De jestis say, 'Bein's ez peepul in ginerul is twice anx-usher ter get unmah'd dan dey is ter git mah'yd, I charges two dollars ter onmah'y 'em an' one dollar ter mah'y 'em.' An' dat nigger sho' done a lan'-offis bus'ness, an' de cluk done de same er sellin' lisunsis.

"Some days he sell twenty pa'r, an' mos' ebber' nigger in de county got 'vo'cement pa-pers f'um dat nigger jestis. He gin de man an' de 'oman both er paper w'ut he done writ on dat he sufferfy dat he done gib de nigger a 'vo'cement, an' dat he done stomp his seal on de paper. Jes' soon ez ebber' nigger man got his 'vo'cement papers he brek fer de clu'k's offis ter git er pa'r er lisunsis ter mah'y ernudder nigger, an' so dey jes' swap wifes lak folks swap hosses county-cote day.

"Dar was de wuss' changin' an' mixin' up ebber you see, twell de quality-folks done riz an' tek chawge ob de gub'ment an' 'lect a quality gent'man an' lawyer fer jedge, an' den de gran' jury 'dite de whole bunch er niggers fer biggermy. I b'liebe dat's w'ut dey call it."

"Yes, that's right," said Mr. Standwick.

"Well, sah, dey nebber was sich er time er 'ditin' an' 'res'in' sence de worl' bergen. It look lak dey gwine ter put ebber' nigger in de county in de pen'tenshy; but Marster tuk er han' 'bout dat time. He tol' de jedge dat de niggers ain' 'tend ter brek de law, dat er low-down white man done deceibe de po' fools, an' 'duce 'em ter do dat w'ut was 'g'inst de law, an' it would be er shame ter put de ig'unt niggers in de pen'tenshy. So de jedge, bein' a good man an' er fa'r man, w'ut use' ter hab plenty er niggers, he nul-squash all de 'ditements an' flung de cases out en de cote-house; but he tol' all dem niggers dey mus' tek de wifes back w'ut dey had fust; an' I sw'ar dem niggers b'en swappin' wifes ebber sense, an' dey ain' ska'sely got straight yit.

"Some er dem nigger men 'd rudder go ter de pen'tenshy dan tek dem same 'oman back w'ut dey had at fust, so dey lit out an' lef' heah, an' ain' nebber come back yit."

"Well," said Mr. Standwick, "did you patronize the justice of the peace and clerk and get you a new wife, Ned?"

Ned glanced at Hester, who was apparently listening intently for his answer, and said sotto voce, with an amusing grimace, "No, sah; I look eroun' er li'l' bit, but I 'cluded I better hol' on ter de one I got. You see, boss, Hester an' me b'en mah'y lak qual-

ity-folks. We mah'y in Marster's house, an' de 'Piskerpul preacher w'ut you heerd ter-day 'form de sur'mony. I was skeered, an' it look ter me lak he gwine say de whole pra'r book; but he jine us too close fer any nigger jestis ter onjine us, so I didn' git mix up wid dem common niggers an' dey hoodoos an' voodoos."

The ride home was short and delightful. The splendid horses were eager to go, and Ned went the farthest way through the town, so, as he expressed it, "All de peepuls could see how a gent'man's nigger kin drive his Marster's kerridge wid his Marster an' his Mistiss an' dey g'ess' in it."

The carriage had hardly stopped at the foot of the front steps before a stable boy was at the heads of the horses, and Ned was at the carriage door, hat and whip in one hand and the handle of the door in the other, ready to open it and let down the steps. As each one in the carriage stepped out, he bowed, and when all were safely on the ground he said, "Dar, now, we-all's b'en ter town an' ter chu'ch an' got back safe, thang Gawd. We seen Marse Hamilton an' Miss Annie an' li'l' young Marster, an' Mr. Stan'ick done see dat Ned's er driver fer true w'en he gits his bro'd clof suit on an' his stovepipe hat an' his blue silk neck-hank'cher; an' he done rid behin' de two fastes' hosses, an' de

fines' in dis county; an' de peepul all seed Ned er drivin', too proud ter look at common niggers, 'ca'se he was drivin' his Marster an' his Mistiss an' dey g'ess'; an' he mus'n't fergit his onlies' wife w'ut rid wid him, an' wus pow'ful hope up 'ca'se she did."

When supper was announced, Colonel Marshall said, "Mr. Standwick, we will give you a cold supper to-night, with the exception of tea and coffee. We follow an immemorial custom in our family, and in a large majority of southern families, in never eating hot suppers on Sunday night. Sunday afternoon and night belong to the servants, especially the cook, according to usage reaching back beyond my memory."

"Well," replied Mr. Standwick, "I am sure no apology is necessary, Colonel; and then, you see, I have learned something more that is new, and that is contrary to what I heard and believed before I came South, when I see such consideration for servants."

After supper Mr. Standwick talked at length and with manifest sincerity of the events of the day; the delightful hospitality at the home of the younger Marshall; the impressive service and sermon; the scene of Ned and Hester at the altar of the church; the cordiality and courtesy extended him, a stranger, by all to whom he had been presented; the interest of Ned and Hester in "de li'l' young Marster," and their solicitude about him, and

the delight and pride of Ned in his rôle of driver of his "Marster's" carriage, and every incident and feature of the day had, he said, been both delightful and instructive.

The conversation, participated in by both Colonel and Mrs. Marshall, continued until near the time for retiring, when Mr. Standwick said, "Colonel, it is a glorious moonlight night. I have rarely seen one more beautiful, and as I purpose beginning my return journey in the morning, I will be greatly obliged if you and Mrs. Marshall will go with me to the burying-ground where the two young captains and your sons and daughter and Tom are resting."

"Certainly, we will be glad to have you go, and will go with you; and in all likelihood we will find Ned and Hester there."

"I should never have supposed," said Mr. Standwick, "from what I have heard of negro superstition, that they would ever be found near a graveyard at night."

"Ordinarily they would not, and I am sure they would not go to any other graveyard; but it seems to be a case where perfect love casteth out fear, for there are but few moonlight nights when they do not go there."

The Colonel excused himself and soon returned, accompanied by Mrs. Marshall, and the three walked slowly over to the burying ground. Simple headstones marked each grave, the only inscription on the single stone

at the head of the grave of the two captains being

"CHARLES STANWICK, U. S. A.

ARTHUR STANWICK, C. S. A.

God Will Judge Betwixt Them."

Walking to the head of the grave, the three stood for a few moments silent and uncovered in the moonlight, for Ned and Hester were kneeling by the grave of Tom.

A mocking-bird which, as the three approached, was pouring forth a torrent of melodious notes till the air was vibrant with his song, ceased to sing and fluttered softly up and rested a little higher in the elm which bent over the graves.

Mr. Standwick stood very near to Colonel Marshall, his hand resting on the arm of the latter, who felt a convulsive movement of the hand, which caused him to look into the face of his guest, whom he perceived was quivering with emotion. Suddenly Mr. Standwick dropped on his knees, and resting his head on his hands, which grasped the top of the gravestone, cried out,

"Oh, my sons! my sons! I have found your resting-place at last! Thank God, you bore yourselves like soldiers and gentlemen. May the peace of God be upon you, and His blessings upon those who laid you to rest here."

Colonel and Mrs. Marshall looked at each other in profound surprise, but stood uncovered and with tear-dimmed eyes till Mr. Standwick rose. When he had recovered his self-control he said,

"My friends, I have not deceived you. They were not my sons, but they were the sons of my brother, who died in Connecticut, where I formerly lived, before they were born; and their mother died at their birth. From that hour they were as my children and called me father, though I had indeed never legally adopted them; but not until last night did I feel sure, or at least know, that the two captains were my beloved foster-sons. Hester, in rearranging my room, as she did every day, placed a picture of each of the brothers on my writing-table for the first time. I have no language to express to you the gratitude I feel for what you did for my living and for my dead. Both of us have laid priceless offerings on the altar of duty, and may well blend our tears."

As he spoke, Ned and Hester drew near, and when he had finished, Ned said, "Boss, Hester an' me is sho' sorry fer you, 'ca'se we gin our boy up, too—our onlies' boy—an' he res' heah, too. I b'en er keepin' de grave ob Marse Arthur an' Cap'n Chawles jes' lak I kep' dose ob Marse Alf'd an' Marse Will-yum, an' I gwine keep on keepin' ob it. An', boss, please 'scuse me, I jes' a po' ig'unt nig-

ger, but I trusses in de promises ob de Lawd, an' I know I gwine see mah boy erg'in."

"Ned, I have the same faith, and I thank you for your fidelity."

"You's welcome, boss, an'—but, 'scuse me erg'in, sah, please; but all dem w'ut resses heah gwine ter rise at de las' day, 'ca'se Mars-ter read me whar de Good Book say so; an' I feel lak w'en dey come, yo' boys an' Mars-ter's boys an' mah boy will all be wash white in de blood er de Lam'." The old negro's voice grew tremulous and he bowed his gray head on the shoulders of his faithful wife, and his stalwart frame shook with sobs.

"Colonel Marshall," Mr. Stanwick said, "incidentally you spoke the other day of the last communion of the two brothers. Will you please tell me of it?"

"Yes, as we stand here by these graves this lovely moonlight night I want to tell you of it and of the scene I witnessed the last time the two brothers were at my house. Both had come alone and both were going to leave after dark the same night. Both had what were in a large measure independent commands, and they were able by reason of that fact to leave camp oftener than otherwise they could have done.

"While Jean said nothing that would reveal the true state of her feeling, but even struggled to resist the promptings of her heart, yet that she loved Charles Stanwick

was a fact she could not wholly conceal; and as to Arthur, we recognized him as the accepted lover of our daughter. I had ridden to town and was returning by the road which runs near the small Episcopal church which stands under the splendid oaks a short distance from here on the road to town. That church was built before the war, when nearly all who lived in this neighborhood were Episcopalians, and were people of independent fortunes; and there are few churches the stained windows and the inside finishings of which are more impressive or artistic.

"As I drew near the church, I saw Arthur and Lucy and Charles and Jean approaching from the direction of the house. The church intervened and they did not see me, and I waited till they reached the church and entered.

"They walked slowly and talked in low tones, and there was something of deep reverence in their steps as they passed into the quiet interior of the church. I dismounted and followed them, and found they had gone straight to the seat immediately in front of the chancel, where the aged rector, as I found afterward, by prearrangement, awaited them to hold a specially arranged service.

"He has been the rector of the church in town and of the church here for more than half a century. He had in the same chancel held in his arms both Jean and Lucy and

signed them 'with the sign of the cross.' He is, as you saw, tall and slender, and his gray hair reaches to his shoulders, and a life of consecrated piety and stainless purity has given to his face an almost saintly expression. Just as I entered he began to read in clear, musical, earnest tones that glorious composition, the Litany, the most expressive, eloquent, and spiritual deliverance ever set forth in human speech.

"The sun was just sinking from sight behind the high hills in the rear of the church and its last rays lighted the altar and rested like a halo of glory upon those who knelt and him who served.

"The voice of the rector seemed to grow stronger as he read, and when he reached that glorious passage 'By thine agony and Bloody sweat, by thy Cross and Passion, by thy precious Death and Burial, and by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension,' there was a ring of confident, exultant, triumphant Christian faith in his tone; and when he had finished reading that sublime service the two couples approached the chancel and knelt—the two young women and the two soldiers, the one in blue, the other in gray—and there together they partook of the broken body and the shed blood of Him who said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.'

"It was a scene of wonderful beauty and impressiveness, and as I stand here and think

upon it I rejoice in that faith which Ned has expressed in his childlike way."

When Colonel Marshall ceased speaking, all the party, as if by common impulse, started toward the gate, Ned and Hester walking a respectful distance in the rear.

As they moved slowly away the mockingbird resumed his carol in low soft notes of surpassing sweetness, which blending with the moaning of the pines on the nearby hillsides floated out upon the air like a requiem for the souls of those who there awaited the resurrection morning.

CHAPTER XIV

NEXT morning after breakfast Mr. Standwick said,

“ Colonel Marshall, I shall take my leave this morning. I am loth to go, but my engagements make it necessary. My mission has ended successfully. Doubt and uncertainty have been removed. I know now where my loved ones rest, and language fails me to express my gratitude to you and Mrs. Marshall. God bless you both. It seems to me that the events of well-nigh a lifetime have been crowded into these few days. I have learned much; and where I fear I harbored prejudice and distrust, I have learned to admire and love.

“ We have both drained sorrow’s chalice to the dregs. You gave two sons, and, I may say with entire truth, a daughter to the cause in the justice of which you believed; and you know my sacrifice.

“ Each of us can yet hold to the political faith we have always professed, and it is not necessary that either you or I should renounce our convictions or indulge in self-reproaches. As long as life lasts I shall cherish the mem-

ory of your great kindness and your cordial and gracious hospitality."

Ned had already gone after Mr. Standwick's horse, and now brought him to the door saddled and beautifully groomed, and stood holding the splendid animal, while Hester and Dinah stood near, waiting to bid the guest good-by.

"And," said Mr. Standwick, when he saw the three, "I am also deeply indebted to these faithful black people, and with your permission I will give each of them a token of appreciation," saying which he went down the steps and advanced to where Ned, Hester and Dinah stood, and bade them good-by, leaving a generous gold piece in the palm of each.

Ned removed his hat and bowed low repeatedly, Hester and Dinah curtsied, and Ned said, "We much erbleege, boss, but we didn' want no pay. We al'ays glad to wait on Marster's comp'ny. You needn' er give us dis gol' ter 'member you by, 'ca'se you'se sho' quality-folks lak Marster, an' we sorry ter see you go. We ain' gwine fergit you, an' we gwine keep de grave green an' de flowers er growin'."

"Thank you, Ned, and I'm going to do something for you to which I know Colonel Marshall will not object. I am going to have a larger stone put at the head of your boy's grave than is there now, and have an inscription put on it."

"Does you mean, boss, dat you gwine ter hab some writin' cut in de stone?"

"Yes, exactly that."

"Den, boss, may I ax you ter put some writin' on it w'ut I'd lak?"

"Certainly, Ned, I will be glad to have carved on the stone anything you wish."

"Den, please, sah, jes' cut on de stone,

"Tom,
Ned an' Hester's boy.
He promise his Miss Ma'y,
An' he kep' his wu'd."

"I will have just those words put on the stone."

"Thankee, boss, an' God bless you. An' boss, please, sah, don' fergit he kep' his wu'd. Dat's de p'int."

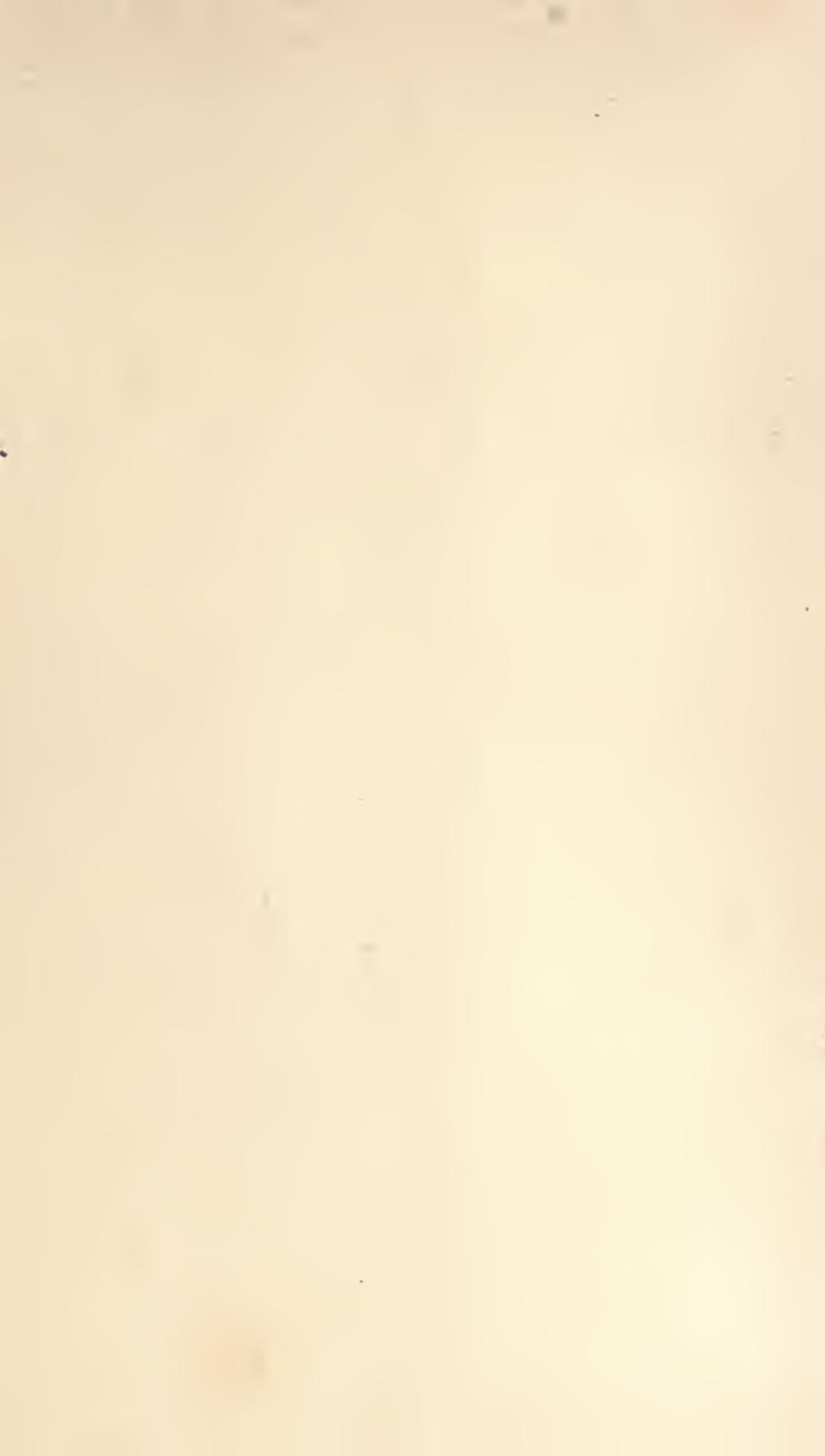
Colonel and Mrs. Marshall had descended the steps and stood near where Mr. Standwick was ready to mount, and he turned and shook hands with them, holding the hand of each long in his grasp. Then he mounted and started to ride away, but turned and said,

"Ned, I am younger than you are and may outlive you, and if I do I intend to have a stone put above your head with an inscription on it, and will put on the stone whatever you wish."

"Thankee, boss, you ve'y kin'," and without hesitation or pause he added, "Jes' hab it on de stone, please, sah,

"Ned: Nigger an' Gent'man."





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